

MORI POINT

A visit to Mori Point, with its dramatic vistas, including views of the Pedro Point Headlands to the south and the Marin Headlands and Point Reyes to the north, leaves no doubt why the GGNRA wanted the 110 acre parcel as a public asset. It protrudes several hundred feet out into the Pacific and is plainly visible from any high point in the City of Pacifica.

On the north it is bordered by Laguna Salada Marsh and Sharp Park Municipal Golf Course, both owned by the City of San Francisco. Laguna Salada once existed as a large coastal lagoon that drained lands to the north. This water body shows up on Francisco Sanchez's original hand-drawn *diseño* for his land grant petition of 1839 as "Laguna Salada". The San Mateo County Surveyor's office of 1868 called it "Salt Lake Valley". County Surveyor J. Cloud called it "Salt Lake" in 1877. By 1894, the County was calling it by its original name "Laguna Salada".¹ Much of the lagoon was still intact until the completion of the West Fairway Subdivision in 1958.² Its vestiges can still be seen within Sharp Park, and it continues to drain parklands to the north.

Mori Point is bounded on the east by Highway 1. To the south is the Calera Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant and 20 acres of restored wetlands, owned by Pacifica.³

This new portion of the GGNRA has an interesting history. Its old quarry figured into the experiences of the Aramai people who lived here, the Spanish with their San Pedro Valley outpost and Francisco Sanchez at his adobe house. In fact industrial activity continued off and on until recent times. The story of coastal agriculture on the San Francisco Peninsula is again represented here. The history of the Ocean Shore Railroad, that cut the hill at Mori Point in two, will be explored at this point in our study. The Mori family and Prohibition's effect on the Coastsides will be a focus. The little known story of the World War II internment camp at Sharp Park will be introduced. Finally, local efforts at preserving Mori Point as open space will be highlighted.

EARLY MORI POINT HISTORY AND ITS QUARRY

The Aramai village of Timigtac, thought to have been in the Rockaway Beach area, may have existed at Mori Point.⁴ Whether these Indian people called the place Timigtac or not, an archeological survey in 1969 recorded a shell midden present, leaving no doubt that prehistoric people occupied the site.⁵ During the Spanish period, Mori Point was within the jurisdiction of the Franciscan padres at *Mission San Francisco de Asis*. After secularization, Francisco Sanchez obtained Mori Point as part of his *Rancho San Pedro*.

The limestone at Mori Point has been utilized by all the cultures associated with the site. Archeological evidence suggests the Indians of the villages of Pruristac and Timigtac quarried limestone for use in construction, decoration and trade.

The resource was duly noted by the Spanish. Beginning in 1776, they used Indian labor to quarry the limestone at Mori Point for their projects at San Francisco. They employed limestone for construction of the *Presidio* and used a variety of stone, gravel and shell from Mori Point to build both the *Presidio* and the mission buildings. Lime pits from the site were utilized to produce whitewash as a sort of paint for the structures.⁶ The Spanish also used Mori Point limestone to create the whitewash for the *San Pedro y San Pablo* outpost in the San Pedro Valley.

On his *diseño* of 1839, Francisco Sanchez made note of the calera (lime pit or quarry) at Mori Point. Undoubtedly, he used lime from the quarry for whitewashing his adobe home, completed in 1846.

During the early American period, the quarry was not much used, but with the construction of the Ocean Shore Railroad and the need to rebuild the City of San Francisco after the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake, the firm, Rockaway Beach Quarry, went to work at Mori Point in 1907. Some of the Quarry's materials were used as ballast for the trackbed of the railroad, while its limestone was used as a building material in the damaged City.

Quarry operators, brothers E.B. and A.L. Stone, leased their property from the elite Tobin family of San Francisco and are said to have made a fortune in the business. They even possessed their own railroad engine and rolling stock that they eventually sold to the Ocean Shore.⁷

Other quarries on the Coastside were initiated about this time. The Vasquez Quarry produced limestone about 1920. It was located about a mile and a half southeast of Miramar. A gravel business worked from a location on Montara Mountain.

The closing of the Ocean Shore Railroad in 1920 certainly did not help the quarry business on the coast. The Stone brothers ended their lease and their quarry reverted to the Tobins. When the Tobins faced financial problems, it went to Hibernia Bank. Finally, in 1942, Horace Hill purchased the quarry from the Bank and established Rockaway Quarry, Incorporated. It produced concrete aggregate and ballast and high-grade limestone. New opportunities brought about by World War II made their business profitable. Another concern, Ken Royce Construction Equipment Company of San Francisco, began work in 1944 on limestone deposits on 190 acres across the highway just east of the Point. The dense, hard, bluish gray material was sold by Ken

Royce as crushed rock for concrete aggregate. Yet another company, California Aggregates, started production of limestone near Rockaway Beach in 1947.

As a result of all this activity, Mori Point's appearance changed. Aerial photographs from 1943 show it without very many roads or improvements, other than some fences. By 1949 roads were apparent as the quarry activities were extended to the north and to the west.⁸ In 1956 evidence exists of more roads, and extensive pits appear on the north and west facings of the Point.

Horace Hill began losing his eyesight and sold Rockaway Quarry in 1953 to Ideal Cement. He continued to operate the sand dredging business there for a few years until committing suicide. In the meantime, Ideal leased the quarry to Howard Marks, the owner of a similar operation on the other side of the County at Belmont. He operated the quarry from 1953 until 1968. Under Marks, modernization of equipment occurred. Then in 1968, the firm of Rhodes and Jamieson took over the lease and operated the quarry for seven years. In December of 1975, Quarry Products Incorporated, owners of quarries in Richmond and Brisbane, became the last commercial operators. In 1976, Quarry Products claimed to be producing 360 tons of processed rock per hour.⁹

However, aerial photos of the late 1960s show quarry operations appear in recession. The main works on the north side have disappeared, while the western side still seems operational. Thus, the majority of quarrying returned to the south on the Calera Creek side. Most operations ceased in the 1980s, as the volume of the quarry's production dropped while the value of the land itself rose.¹⁰ (See the last sub-section of this portion of the study, "Mori Point Preservation Efforts.")

ETHNICITY AND COASTSIDE FARMING

THE MORI FAMILY COMES TO THE COASTSIDE

Mori Point is named for the Stefano Mori family who came from Italy and settled in the Pacifica area in the 1870s. They were among the early Italian immigrants to reach California. The initial rush of people from Italy began about this time as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was being debated, passed and enacted.¹¹ Like most the Coastside's immigrants, it's probable that Stefano worked the land of others, then leased property, before he purchased 19 acres of farmland at Mori Point in 1888.

The original use of Mori Point was cattle-raising during the Spanish era and then as part of Francisco Sanchez's *Rancho San Pedro*. The Mori Family raised cattle and horses as well. However, they also cultivated large sections of their land. The family raised artichokes, brussel sprouts and cabbage. These crops that they helped to

introduce had major ramifications for the agricultural industry not just in San Mateo County, but California on the whole.

FARMERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD (CONTEXTUAL)

After the Gold Rush began, food products brought big profits in San Francisco. Before large numbers of Italian immigrants arrived in California, farming was largely conducted by Americans from “the states,” the Irish and the Chinese.

Despite its remoteness, the Coastside’s rich agricultural landscape enticed squatters, renters and landowners with their workers to settle and start their farms. Whatever resources they had coupled with years of hard work and allowed families to feed themselves while they tried to produce enough surplus crops to bring to market for profit.¹² In doing so they transformed the “open range” of the Coastside.

As they did throughout California, the new farmers fenced in pastures for livestock and fields for grain and vegetables. Carved out from the casually drawn boundaries of the old *ranchos*, more exact surveys delineated property holdings into smaller and smaller parcels.¹³ The newcomers increasingly focused on “cash” crops. At first potatoes and cabbage, later on dairy products and grains, were meant to help the farmers earn money in the market place.¹⁴

By 1860, the farmers of San Mateo County were making a significant contribution to the development of the West by sustaining San Francisco’s food supply. That year they produced 165,163 bushels of wheat, 100,000 bushels of oats and an equal number of bushels of barley. Dairies on the Peninsula provided 200,000 pounds of butter and 23,000 pounds of cheese for hungry people up in the City.¹⁵

The Gold Rush brought many new people. Of course many were Americans from the states “back east”. Of the foreign-born the Irish were among the most numerous. They had many differences from their American counterparts. However, they shared similar views of California’s future, and while back east the Irish faced grave discrimination centered on their Catholic religion, in California, which had been a Catholic place before, there was far less of this. Besides, most everyone believed that out in California, a person ought to have opportunity for a new life no matter what their past experience.¹⁶

Also aiding the Irish in California was the fact that most of them had had an immigrant past already. Whether from Australia or the big cities of the East Coast, when they arrived in California they possessed the know-how to succeed in a new land. On the whole, they tended to have a little bit more money, a little bit more education, and perhaps they were a little bit more capable to begin with, than those stuck in the East.¹⁷

Unlike almost everyone else in California, American or otherwise, the Irish intended to stay here. In general, all other newcomers came as single young men looking to make a fortune in this new place and then return home. There was a certain indifference to California that was noticeable in others, but not in the Irish. For them, the potato famine and political oppression in the homeland made going back nearly an impossible choice. Motivated to stay in California from the beginning, they tended to be more concerned with its economy, society and politics. The lack of interest of others rendered little competition in these areas. Thus their own initiative allowed the Irish to achieve advances in arenas of human endeavor far in front of their countrymen in the East. They also were more apt to bring their families with them to California, or send for them earlier than others. Again, this acted to encourage care for the new place.

In San Mateo County, many Irish became farmers. American and Irish farmers (with the Portuguese, the Germans and the Chinese, as well) made incredible gains according to the County Assessor's Office of 1864.¹⁸ From 1860, wheat production had increased nearly 45% to 238,250 bushels. While barley stayed about the same, the oat harvest had grown to 240,000 bushels more than doubling the 1860 number. The 35,000 acres of cultivated areas in the County were also yielding 200,000 bushels of potatoes and 8,500 tons of hay.

Only eight years later, the County was boasting about 85,000 acres of cultivated lands. Wheat production had nearly doubled to 450,000 bushels. Barley increased five-fold to 500,000 bushels. Potato production grew threefold to 600,000 bushels. The hay crop nearly tripled to 24,000 tons. Meanwhile the dairy industry had made great gains too. From 200,000 pounds of butter in 1860, ranches in the County, in 1872, rendered 225,000 pounds; from 23,000 pounds of cheese, there was a better than tenfold increase to 250,000 pounds.¹⁹

By 1880, with a total San Mateo County population of 8,700 people, more than a third were European-born, and of these, 900, more than 10%, had been born in Ireland.²⁰ The Irish were ubiquitous throughout the County as demonstrated by geographical features like Irish Ridge or places named for individuals like Daly City, Thronton Beach, Sweeney Ridge and McNee Ranch.²¹ Beyond being farmers they were important political and business leaders of the Peninsula. Some Peninsula Irish had gained regional fame as elite suburbanites, of the ruling class of the West, who did their business from behind their desks in San Francisco. In the Menlo Park area, "Silver King" and estate owner James Flood, was joined by Joseph A. Donohue, at his 40-acre *Holm Grove*, and John T. Doyle, at his 400-acre *Ringwood*.²²

The second largest immigrant group in the County in those early years were the Chinese. Many single young men were pushed out of China because of political upheaval,

war and intense poverty. They generally came to California to make a fortune and then hoped to return home (like everyone else except the Irish). Since 1790, federal law had held that only white people could become naturalized. This legalized discrimination and allowed the California state legislature to target the Chinese as deserving lesser rights. In all walks of life, the Chinese suffered severely from unfair practices made legitimate by law.

San Mateo County historians claim that the Chinese were more “accepted”²³ on the San Francisco Peninsula. To be sure they were deprived of political liberty and forced to endure inferior status, but because they were willing to take jobs building dams for the Spring Valley Water Company, working in lumber camps, serving as domestics, laboring for the San Francisco-San Jose Railroad and toiling on the farms of others, they were deemed indispensable (since few others were willing to do this hard, low paying work). For the Chinese themselves, escape from the mines of the Sierra Nevada and railroad camps of the Central Pacific to San Mateo County represented a step-up. At first they worked for others, but many moved on to become fishermen, shop owners and tenant farmers.²⁴

In the 1860s, the tenant farms of the Chinese within San Mateo County tended to be small, usually but 10 acres in size.²⁵ By 1870, of a County population of 6,600, 500 were Chinese, many of whom were on the Coastside. According to the census, of these 500, 200 were seasonal farm laborers.²⁶

Perhaps San Mateo County was a sort of a haven, but elsewhere in the state, anti-Asian fever was building in the 1870s and 1880s. The completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 released thousands of Chinese workers from their construction jobs. They ended up back in California, for the most part, competing with white workers for employment. Unfortunately, this flood on the labor market occurred while California and the rest of the country were entering into a deep and prolonged economic depression. In California, many of the white workers blamed the Chinese for their woes. Led by the (largely Irish) Workingmen’s Party of California, agitation against Chinese emigration developed as a powerful political force. By 1882, this movement manifested itself into federal action when Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act. Signed by Republican President Chester A. Arthur, this law stopped immigration from China, with few exceptions, for 10 years. In 1892, the exclusion was renewed for another 10 years, and in 1902, the Act was made permanent (until it was repealed in late 1943, during World War II).²⁷

In San Mateo County the absence of industrial working conditions and urban congestion plus the lack of competition on the farms and estates still mitigated some of the agitation, but even on the Peninsula anti-Chinese sentiment was building throughout the late nineteenth century. On March 13, 1878, Redwood City claimed to have cre-

ated the second branch of the “Workingman’s Club” (certainly the first being in San Francisco). Fifteen pillars of the community were listed as signing “the pledge”; the password for the organization was: “the Chinese must go.”²⁸ On the Coastside, feelings seemed to have run just as high. One Half Moon Bay candidate for County Supervisor promised to run as part of any “anti-Chinese ticket.”²⁹ In February of 1886, leaders of Redwood City’s anti-Chinese association visited Half Moon Bay to help Coastside form their own club. The County’s District Attorney was among these representatives. They met with some of the Coastside’s most established families -- the Pitchers, Debenedettis and Johnstons, for example. Even the Catholic priest, Fr. A.M. Santandreaudreau attended. They eagerly engaged themselves in forming the Coastside’s first anti-Chinese organization.

Ramifications of the Chinese Exclusion Act were many and far reaching. For the Chinese immigrants themselves, almost entirely men, the prospects of finding a wife and creating a family in California were snuffed out.³⁰ Throughout the state and in San Mateo County, their numbers shrank as compared to other ethnic groups.

For the California economy, as the state recovered from the depression, the greatest effect of the Act was the creation of a labor vacuum in the factories of the cities and especially on the farms. Filling this need were a variety of immigrants from countries as far removed from one another as Italy, the Philippines and Japan.³¹

For San Mateo County, it was the Italians that would have the greatest impact, in pure numbers, in cultural activity and in changes they brought to agriculture. Most Italians that came here were poor young men. Back in Italy where people were attached to the land, only the oldest son in the family could expect to inherit property and have his own farm. The others had to somehow make their own way. Some chose adventure in America where a fortune could be made. Afterwards, a return to Italy with money enough to buy land could make dreams come true. Like the Irish, the Italians who made it to California advanced more quickly than their counterparts on the East Coast. They tended to be from the northern sections of Italy where people had a little more education and money to begin with. Plus, making it to California put Italians in position to work on the land, as they hoped, as opposed to factory work in the cities of the East. The Chinese Exclusion Act meant their labor on the farms was needed. Italians worked on the lands of others, saved money, rented their own acres when they could and then, those most successful, like Stefano Mori, bought their own farms. They readily adapted to the new land. Its climate and fertile rolling hillsides were much like back home. They also had ideas about new “cash” crops that would soon change the face of agriculture in places like the Coastside of San Mateo County. Some did return to Italy. Others sent for families to join them and became permanent residents in the new land.

By the 1890s, Italian and Portuguese newcomers outnumbered all other European-born immigrants except the Irish in San Mateo County. The 1900 census revealed that foreign-born adults outnumbered native born adults here. The Italians continued to make population gains until by 1920, nearly one out of ten of the 36,000 residents in San Mateo County had been born in Italy.³² By that time, Italian immigrants and their children had (as the Mori family had) branched out into a variety of businesses on the Peninsula, including running hotels, restaurants and mercantile establishments. However, on the Coastside, their major activities continued to be in agriculture. In fact, just before World War II, Italian Americans dominated the agricultural business of San Mateo County.

In smaller numbers, but also having an important impact, were Japanese immigrants. The original Japanese to come to San Mateo County had much in common with the Italians. They came from a place where people were tied to the land, but tradition allowed only the oldest in the family to inherit the farm. As Japan's population increased in the nineteenth century, many young men felt pushed to go to another place, hopefully make a fortune and then return. Because of the Chinese Exclusion Act and the need for labor on the West Coast, many came to California to seek opportunity. Some worked on the estates of the elite as servants and gardeners. Others toiled in the saltworks of the Bayside, at 90¢ per 12 hour day.³³ Many ended up on the farms, working for others and then saving money for places of their own. Whether one had their own land or not, life was hard. One Japanese immigrant woman at Pescadero lamented:

*During a peak harvest season, I cooked for thirty farm hands and got little more than two hours of sleep at night. The demands made upon me were great and required tremendous physical stamina.*³⁴

By the turn of the century, Italian and Japanese growers had begun transforming agriculture on the San Francisco Peninsula. They specialized in certain crops like Brussel sprouts, artichokes and cut flowers, with the Italians being particularly associated with the first two and the Japanese the last one, although at times the crops were shared between them and other growers as well.

Of course, the know-how and the hard work of the Italians and Japanese had much to do with their success, but the advent of gasoline-powered trucks and refrigerated railroad cars also encouraged specialization.

During the 1890s, potatoes were still the leading crop of the County, but a plant disease and competition from the new agricultural products put it into decline.³⁵ By the 1900s, specialty crops had become the leading harvests, especially cut flowers, brussel sprouts and, of course, artichokes. A description from 1916 said of the Coastside:

The soil in this district has always been known for its splendid fertility. All the lowlands and many of the side hills along the coast. . . having been given over entirely to the raising of vegetables. Here, that dainty aristocrat among vegetables, the artichoke, planted in great fields develops a flavor that it attains nowhere else. . . The winters are so mild that the plant is at its best during the Christmas holidays and early spring, just when it is needed and appreciated the most, on account of the lack of other fresh vegetables.³⁶

The Ocean Shore Railroad and gasoline-powered trucks transported the artichokes, sprouts and flowers to San Francisco. Refrigerated railroad cars could then get these products to all parts of the United States. When Sadakusu Enomoto sent his chrysanthemums via refrigerated railroad cars to New Orleans for the All Saints Day celebration in 1915, he created a sensation there, and the floral business here boomed.³⁷ Italian Coastside growers began sending artichokes to the East in 1904 and found markets in New York, Connecticut and New Jersey. In 1912, they started using refrigerated railroad cars and established a million dollar business, when trains commenced running daily to the East Coast.³⁸

Because the value of these types of crops exceeded that of the grains and potatoes of the previous generation of growers, there was less need for huge parcels of property. Therefore, the size of farms in the County decreased to typically 20 to 50 acres, a tenth of what farms had encompassed just 10 years before. By 1920, the transformation had taken place. New cash crops, grown by a new wave of immigrants (and their children) had taken the agricultural lands of the Coastside and created a more productive and profitable industry.

By 1940, Italian vegetable farmers and Japanese flower growers had ensconced themselves as the absolute leaders of agribusiness on the Peninsula, but what happened on December 7, 1941, and the advent of World War II, changed things.

For the Italians, those that had never become naturalized, could no longer live or work west of Highway 1. Other regulations precluded these immigrants from owning flashlights and radios. However, these laws were mostly lifted after a few months, in fact on Columbus Day, October 12, 1942.³⁹

For the Japanese, actions against their civil liberties manifested themselves much more severely. Anti-Asian feelings for the Japanese had been a part of their experience from the beginning here in California. The War now allowed hatred and fear to surface to the point where rational thinking and constitutional rights were totally ignored. President Franklin Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 allowed local military commanders to intern people whose family roots were of countries at war with the United States. Of course, the law was used almost exclusively against the Japanese on the West Coast

whether they were original *Issei* immigrants or children of immigrants, *Nisei*, who were by birth citizens of the United States. By May 9, 1942, all of the Japanese Americans of San Mateo County had been taken to Tanforan Racetrack, which acted as an “Assembly Center,” for people awaiting transportation to permanent camps in the distant deserts and mountains to the east.⁴⁰ Among the injustices inflicted against these people was the requirement that all their possessions had to be sold off within a 30-day period. For the Japanese American growers of the County, this was a disaster. Many would lose everything gained by the work of two generations.⁴¹

Removal of the Japanese Americans, the draft and the general conditions of the War created a severe labor shortage for California and San Mateo County agricultural industries. During the summer of 1942, San Mateo County farm leaders assisted lobbying efforts from across the West, trying to encourage the United States State Department to allow for the importation of Mexican labor. On August 24, 1942, the United States and Mexico signed an agreement authorizing Mexican citizens to come to the United States on a seasonal basis to work the fields as the War roared on. San Mateo County had 100 workers in place within the first year.⁴² Locals noted that they were largely illiterate and shoeless, but worked the farms of the Coastside and North County when they were needed the most.

This effort to supply the West with farm workers came to be known as the *Bracero* Program. By 1944, more than 118,000 Mexicans were providing labor to keep agriculture productive in the West. After the War, the program kept going. In March of 1946, farm lobbyists cited the economic post-war boom and increasing demand for food in the United States, and all over the world, as reasons to keep *Braceros* in the fields. Not until 1963 did Congress refuse to allow any more extensions for the *Bracero* Program.⁴³

Since World War II, agriculture in San Mateo County has declined. By 1974, artichokes were being cultivated on only 440 acres, and brussel sprouts on 1,100 acres.⁴⁴ In the meantime, the floral industry surpassed vegetables and dairy products in importance. In fact by 1999, flower growing accounted for nearly 80% of revenues earned on crop production.⁴⁵

As late as 1995, San Mateo County was still the second largest producer of flowers in California. However, most of the floriculture was actually achieved in indoor greenhouses, by that time, and while artichokes and brussel sprouts were still grown, tourism and even commercial fishing eclipsed those crops as more important industries of the coast.

BREAKING THE ISOLATION OF THE COAST AND THE OCEAN SHORE RAILROAD

THE PROBLEM (CONTEXTUAL)

Today's visitor to Mori Point can hike to the cut in the hill and see busy Highway 1 below. This excavation was originally scooped out by the Ocean Shore Railroad while laying track through here in 1907. (See photos below.) Although the railroad was never completed all the way to Santa Cruz, and ended up busted and ridiculed, it successfully broke the isolation of the San Mateo County Coastside which had been a vexing issue for the farmers of the coast for 50 years.

Any prospective settler of the San Mateo County Coastside just after the Gold Rush began could see the great promise. Fertile valleys, adequate rainfall, nearby creeks,

mild winters, tall forests: all invited exploitation. However, while the natural resources were present, the topography of the coast played against the pioneers. With San Pedro and Montara Mountains to the north, the coastal mountains to the east, the chalklike cliffs of Santa Cruz County to the south and the Pacific Ocean, without an adequate natural harbor to the west, the people of the coast were sealed into their section of the County.



Fig. 4.2: Photo of the railroad cut south of Sharp Park (looking north).



Fig. 4.3: Photo of the railroad cut south of Sharp Park (looking south).

Early on, residents began dreaming of a railroad that could break this isolation. On the Bayside, the San Francisco-San Jose Railroad was successfully completed in 1864. For the Coastside, the depressed economic conditions of the 1870s dampened hopes that were revived again in the 1880s.⁴⁶ Still Coastsiders would have to wait for the organization of the Ocean Shore Railroad in 1905 before a railroad could relieve their transportation woes.

For the farmers and ranchers of the 1850s, conditions seemed almost impossible. At first there were no real

roads, just old Indian and Spanish trails passable by foot or on horseback. Even after the first roads were built during the decade, while they allowed stagecoach service, the turnpikes crossed steep hills, that made transporting farm products slow and expensive.⁴⁷

And so, farmers looked to the sea for daring ship's captains to attempt to carry their crops to San Francisco markets. However, without an adequate harbor, this was a challenging prospect. Professor A.D. Bache, reporting for the Coast Survey in 1858, described the coastline from the Golden Gate to Año Nuevo as "exceedingly rocky and forbidding." As for a possible location for a port: "The shoreline and the country generally present a very broken and ragged appearance, occasioned by the deep gulches that cut through to the ocean."⁴⁸ Another federal observer, George Davidson, commented around the same time about the San Mateo County coast that its cliffs were "quite vertical faces" and the shoreline was (and he repeated Bache) "broken and ragged in appearance."⁴⁹

Nevertheless, as early as 1853, small sailing schooners⁵⁰ took the risk and anchored off appointed places like Pillar Point⁵¹ to receive the goods of farmers. Captains had the produce lightered to the ship, requiring the crew to wade to shore and shoulder the cargo to waiting boats.⁵² Such attempts to gain a shipload could only be accomplished when the sea was calm.

Even after the first wharves were established, ships' crews hated this risky work. Albert S. Evans, who visited in the 1870s, reported that the sailors referred to the San Mateo County coast by "a terrible name". They complained of shores lined with "black reefs of rocks" appearing as if they were "ugly fangs like wild beasts watching for their prey."⁵³

Certainly the experiences of American pioneer James Johnston of Half Moon Bay is illustrative of the situation. About 1853, he decided to build a New England style "salt-box" house requiring lumber. Hauling wood over the hill was impossible, so he had a ship come near enough to the coast to drop redwood timbers into the ocean, with the logical expectation they would float to shore like driftwood, and then be collected on the beach.⁵⁴ Around the same time, Johnston's brothers arrived on the Peninsula with 800 head of dairy cattle and wagons from the East; Johnston was initiating one of California's first dairies. The brothers had to improvise with tackle and ropes to manage bringing the animals and vehicles over the hill from the Bayside.⁵⁵

Life must have seemed so much easier on the Bayside. El Camino, although dusty in the summer and muddy in the winter, was the main road from San Francisco to California's first state capital, San Jose. San Mateo County was positioned in between and thus enjoyed stagecoach service running through it as early as 1849.

Roads became a priority on the Peninsula, even before San Mateo County was born.⁵⁶ As the Coastsides and most of the Peninsula was originally part of San Francisco County, that government became the first to attempt to break the isolation of the coast with a road it built from San Mateo to Half Moon Bay in 1855. However, one year after San Mateo County was formed, Coastsiders, in 1857, petitioned the new county for an improved turnpike.⁵⁷ A private toll road became the answer, but it took some time. By 1860, contractors Bowmen and Loveland had only completed the stretch from San Mateo to Crystal Springs.⁵⁸ The road to Half Moon Bay remained steep and dangerous until 1866, when finally work was completed. Gangs of Chinese laborers blasted cuts into the hillsides and then hauled away the debris.⁵⁹ Some of these cuts are still visible as one travels Highway 92, which traces much of the 1866 road over the hill.

With a decent road to the coast now a reality, extensions were built from Half Moon Bay, south to San Gregorio and Pescadero.

While progress on road building from east to west might have seemed slow, the creation of proper roads to the north on the Coastsides never occurred during the nineteenth century. In the 1850s, the road from Martini's Creek over Montara Mountain was a difficult trail to navigate even on horseback. Few improvements were made by the 1870s, and Coastsides residents repeatedly petitioned the County Board of Supervisors to improve it. Instead the Board of Supervisors abandoned the trail and opened a new road in 1879. This new Half Moon Bay-Colma Road, with its steep grades and winding ascents, was deemed unusable by the Coastsiders as well. (See the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* portion of this study for more on the Half Moon Bay-Colma Road.)

To the south, the people in the Pescadero area, at that time within Santa Cruz County, fumed about the lack of transportation to Santa Cruz. The absence of adequate roads motivated them to petition Sacramento to allow this south coastal area to become annexed to San Mateo County, which was showing at least some progress in crossing the hill. In 1868, the legislature agreed and acted, thus increasing the land area of San Mateo County by nearly one fourth.⁶⁰

While stage service from east to west was not deplorable, farm products were seldom hauled on the toll roads. This had been business the turnpike companies had counted on. Eventually they lost money, and the roads had to be taken over by the County.⁶¹

On the other hand, the stagecoach lines had less overhead and continued passenger and mail service businesses. While the completion of the San Francisco-San Jose Railroad stopped stagecoach travel on the Bayside from north to south, it actually enhanced this type of transportation from east to west. The railroad used stages as their connection for allowing tourists from San Francisco, and other places, access to hunting, fishing, camping and other outdoor recreational pursuits gaining in popular-

ity on the Coastside. Moreover, local commuting increased as the population of the County grew.

Daily stage service from San Mateo to the Coastside began in 1865, even before the toll road to Half Moon Bay was completely finished. The 78-mile route actually terminated at Santa Cruz. The building of the La Honda Toll Road in 1873 allowed service between Redwood City and the coast. By 1878, Pescadero enjoyed daily stage service from two companies, one from Redwood City and the other from San Mateo.

Nevertheless, stage service was limited to passengers and the mail. The day-long, bumpy ride was fine for the business traveler or tourist, but for the farmer and his copious crop production, west to east land transportation was practically non-existent.

That left the ocean and seagoing ships. From the beginning larger ships would not attempt a landing off the San Mateo County coast. The work was accomplished by small sailing vessels. By the 1870s, little steamships took on the work.⁶² In 1881, these types of vessels were so daring as to stop at the dangerous Gordon's Chute at Tunitas Creek twice a week. In fact there was a variety of landing places on the coast for ships' captains to choose from.

As discussed previously in this study focusing in on *Rancho Corral de Tierra*, James G. Denniston built the first wharf on the Coastside at Pillar Point in 1859. He not only had his own products loaded onto ships from there, but allowed surrounding farmers to use it as well. Potatoes, grains and dairy products left here for San Francisco.

In April of 1860, the *San Mateo Gazette* announced that James Van Carnap had installed a hawser system at Miramontes Point, south of the town of Half Moon Bay. At this "landing," vessels were to approach the shore where a post supporting a loading device could sling cargo aboard with a dragrope. The article claimed that great quantities of grain were being loaded onto the schooners *Black Prince* and *Wild Pigeon* from Van Carnap's and Denniston's. After this report little else was heard about Van Carnap's.

However, J.P. Ames established the third and the most successful of the early landings at Half Moon Bay. His Amesport (also accounted for in the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* section of this study) was built at today's Miramar between Half Moon Bay and Denniston's. The August 1, 1868, edition of the *San Mateo Gazette* tells us that 500 feet of the pier had been completed. It was extended another 1,000 feet the next year to better facilitate the new coastal steamers. Also present by this time were warehouses for storage of potatoes, grain and hay. By the 1870s, Amesport was handling 1,000 sacks of grain a day during harvest time⁶³ and had become the best shipping point on the Coastside.⁶⁴

However, Denniston's, Van Carnaps' and Amesport seemed far away for people on the south coast. As early as 1864, lumberman William Waddell had built a 700-foot wharf at Año Nuevo. He had a shingle mill about five miles away and connected the wharf and the mill with a wooden rail system. The wharf developed into a community as other lumber mills came to use it. By 1867, the landing had warehouses, two residences, a store, a post office and a saloon. During its peak, two million feet of lumber a year was shipped from it. Sadly, Waddell was killed in a grizzly bear attack in 1875.⁶⁵ The wharf itself was destroyed in a storm about five years later.

North of Waddell's, at Pigeon Point, on May 23, 1861, the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* reported that lumber was not being shipped from here "owing, no doubt, to the difficulty of loading vessels." However, during the 1860s, farmers of the south coast devised a boom and cable system to swing crops and lumber out to patiently waiting ships. In the 1880s, lumberman George Chandler replaced this operation with an "adjustable chute."⁶⁶ Recurrent storms menaced loading operations at Pigeon Point throughout its history.

According to federal observer George Davidson, wealthy Coastside landholder Loren Coburn also had a chute near Pigeon Point about this time,⁶⁷ but much more about it is obscured by the passage of time.

Farmer and San Mateo County Supervisor Alexander Gordon constructed perhaps the most spectacular attempt at breaking the isolation of the coast. In 1872, he built a large chute from the bluffs on the north side of Tunitas Creek that connected with the ocean below. His hope was to slide produce from his 1,000-acre farm to waiting ships below, along with that of other local farmers. This 100-foot chute was built at a perilous 45 degree angle. The downward moving sacks of potatoes and grain put fear into the hearts of sailors as the cargo built up speed toward awaiting vessels. Sometimes sacks would generate enough friction on their way down that holes would burn in them, and if the sacks did not burst on impact they might be on fire by the time they reached the ship. The huge Pacific swells and rocks just beneath the cliff created yet more anxiety for ships' captains. They often refused to anchor under the chute unless conditions were nearly perfect. The depression of the 1870s caused Gordon to go bankrupt. In 1885, a storm destroyed the chute. However, its eyebolts can still be seen.⁶⁸

The last try to aid farmers with a pier was Henry Cowell's. He built his 1,000-foot wharf and nearby warehouse at Half Moon Bay in 1902 (Cowell's history is described in the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* section of this study).

With the twentieth century coming, many on the Coastside were benefiting by having electricity (1893) and even telephone service (1897), but for the farmers, the isolation of the coast had still not been broken after 50 years of human endeavor. There existed

a few rough roads that crossed the hills to the east, but they were hardly adequate for hauling bulk cargo. Moreover, still no usable thoroughfare existed to the north. As late as 1911, the Coastside's mail was still handled by obsolete stagecoach service.⁶⁹ Meanwhile the wharves, chutes and hawsers, conceived to link the Coastside with ships at sea, were at the mercy of the unpredictable Pacific Ocean.

Change, however, was on its way.

STORY AND LEGACY OF THE OCEAN SHORE RAILROAD (CONTEXTUAL)

Dreams for a railroad for the Coastside can be traced at least as far back as 1873, when the *Oakland Daily Transcript* reported of plans for rails "to Half Moon Bay and possibly to Santa Cruz."⁷⁰ During the economically depressed 1870s, such talk went away, but in the 1880s, more thought went into the concept. In succession, there were a host of "paper railroads" that drew up ideas on maps, but never did much more. They included the San Francisco and Ocean Railroad (1881), Pacific Railway Company (1889), Colma-Half Moon Bay Road (its electric line proposal, 1892), San Francisco and West Shore Railroad (also known as West Shore Railroad, 1895) and the San Francisco and Southern Railroad Company (1903).⁷¹

All this activity was part of a new interest in railroad construction, sort of a second wave of it. Across the United States, mainline routes had been established by the turn of the century, but smaller feeder lines, featuring electric interurban railroads, were being proposed to fill transportation gaps. These new projects were especially popular in the West, which did not have as much rail, but was gaining population. Real estate speculation usually became part of the plan, as better transportation opened new residential areas, allowed access to resources, encouraged industrial development and increased land values.

That a railroad for the coast seemed certain can be determined by big-name San Franciscans such as the Tobin family buying up coastal property in the Pacifica area in the 1890s. In San Francisco the most substantial group of businessmen yet began planning for building a railroad about the turn of the century. They pooled \$3 million together, making this a serious venture. These original investors saw that the needs of the farmers could finally be answered. Other natural resources on the coast such as timber, cement and mineral products could be properly exploited. They envisioned the entire strip from San Francisco to Santa Cruz becoming a vacation play land, with all the accompanied business possibilities. However, of all the opportunities they could see, real estate sales seemed the most lucrative. A railroad would increase the value of farmlands because produce could be better brought to market. Lands containing other natural resources could likewise become more important. Mostly, the railroad would open the way for suburban development. It would enable people to purchase summer houses on the beach, or even allow them to become commuters,

as fast, reliable train service would facilitate people working in the city, but living in the country. Imaginative names such as Vallemar, Granada and Salada Beach would evoke an alluring sense of Old Spanish California, combined with the newest concepts of living in the twentieth century. As discussed previously in the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* section of this study, the greatest plans were reserved for Granada, which would become the main recreational center and the area of greatest real estate activity.

The initial plan called for an 80-mile long, double track railroad from San Francisco to Santa Cruz. This would be an electric railway, the most advanced form of transportation coming to California. Already the new Key Route was serving the East Bay. The North Shore and the Petaluma & Santa Rosa were starting up across the Golden Gate.⁷² Electric lines were radiating out from Los Angeles. A San Francisco streetcar company had reached as far south as San Mateo by 1903.

Building this Coastside rail line was to commence simultaneously at San Francisco and Santa Cruz. The immediate goal for construction on the south end was to reach the cement works at Davenport. Revenue produced from this linkage would assist with financing the rest of the work. On the map, the project looked simple enough, a straight shot down the coast, but the original survey parties began to render a more challenging description of the construction that lie ahead. Gullies would require numerous bridges. At many points just beyond San Francisco, building would have to proceed 200 to 300 feet above the surf. The worst stage of construction would occur at San Pedro Mountain. A 400-foot tunnel would need to be dug out of solid rock. Crews would then have to work on a ledge 700 feet above the ocean at Devil's Slide, already notorious for its unstable nature.⁷³

For the purposes of this study, it is interesting to note that this initial planning called for rail spurs on Calera Creek to reach the quarry at Mori Point.⁷⁴

The incorporation of the Ocean Shore Railroad was announced to the public on May 18, 1905. J. Downey Harvey became the corporation's president. The popular clubman had interests in a variety of real estate and banking concerns. The first Vice President was "Coffee King"⁷⁵ J.A. Folger. Second Vice President was Horace D. Pillsbury, of the prestigious law firm, Pillsbury, Madison & Sutro. The other directors included Peter D. Martin, of the pioneer family, Charles C. Moore, president of a large engineering company, and Burke Corbet, another attorney, who was corporate counsel and secretary.

The slogan for the company was: "It reaches the beaches,"⁷⁶ as the railroad immediately began its plans for real estate sales. Not even the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake a year later dampened real estate ambitions. The Railroad's subsidiary company, the Ocean Shore Land Company, laid out Edgemar, Salada Beach, Brighton Beach, Val-

lemar and San Pedro Terrace (all together the future City of Pacifica) in anticipation that the disaster in the City would inspire people to exit San Francisco and live in the safer suburbs.

On September 9, 1905, the Ocean Shore's board of directors awarded the construction contract to C.E. Loss.⁷⁷ Grading started on September 17. Over 1,000 laborers began their work at both ends of the line.

Problems arose immediately. At Santa Cruz, the Southern Pacific Railroad built a spur track across the Ocean Shore's projected rail line. Legal action was unsuccessful which resulted in having to change plans, forcing the creation of a smaller than desired station. At the same time, the Cowell Lime & Cement Co., owners of property where the railroad intended to build a wharf at Santa Cruz, decided to hold out for a higher price than what had been discussed at first. Again court action, this time seeking aid in condemning the Cowell property in favor of the Railroad, failed.

Nevertheless, work went on. By November 1, six miles of track had been laid out from Santa Cruz, and by May, 1906, rails had been extended all the way to Swanton. On the 18th, a steam engine actually pulled the first train with passengers, 105 engineering students from the University of California on their way to their annual summer school. Less than a month after that, regular service started up with two trains everyday, each way. By the fall, plans were on the charts for connecting Swanton to the crucial cement works at Davenport, but the Southern Pacific ruined the day again by buying up rights for the Davenport connection. The Southern Pacific completed its track by the spring of 1907, and the Ocean Shore found itself sealed off from this important traffic.

Sadly, problems in the south paled to the disaster in the north. On April 18, 1906, an 8.1 magnitude earthquake hit the San Francisco Bay Area causing immense damage. Fires in the City generated even more destruction. Near Mussel Rock, which sits just off the coast at the border between today's Daly City and Pacifica, the railroad was in the midst of activity. About 4,000 feet of track, along with rolling stock and construction equipment were knocked into the ocean. The losses were devastating enough, but the concept of refinancing was made more problematic because the railroad's original investors were out so much more. Many had their holdings in the City wiped out. Moreover, attempts to find new lenders were difficult because nearly everyone that had money invested into rebuilding San Francisco. Betting on a star-crossed railroad adventure would have to wait. In order to immediately mitigate the damage and continue progress, the Ocean Shore leadership decided to downgrade plans. The double track line became a single track project, and the electric rail idea gave way to old fashion steam engines.⁷⁸

From the vantage point of today, it seems incredible, but the Railroad continued to

make progress. By September, 1907, rails had reached Rockaway Beach. In fact, at Laguna Salada, which was slated to become a resort area, “an ambitious hotel”⁷⁹ was built, joined by a dance pavilion and bathhouses.

On October 2, the Ocean Shore actually opened train service to Tobin (formerly San Pedro Terrace) at the south end of today’s Pacifica.⁸⁰ The railroad promoted Tobin as a sportsman’s paradise, perfect for surf fishing. Lots were sold in the little north coast sub-divisions. Sunday excursions brought small investors who were promised that communities like Edgemar, Salada, Brighton, Vallemar, Rockaway and Tobin would soon become reality. The same promises, of course, were being made over Montara Mountain to the south at Montara, Moss Beach, Princeton, Granada, Miramar and Arleta Park (near Half Moon Bay).⁸¹

The most incredible part of the Ocean Shore Railroad story was its success in building through San Pedro Mountain and over Devil’s Slide. During 1907, the 400-foot tunnel and the ledges necessary to do this work were accomplished. At what engineers called Saddle Cut, 3,500 tons of solid rock was blown in the Pacific Ocean in order to continue the roadbed work. To do this, crews drilled a 70-foot bore into the mountain. Workers took three days to stuff nine tons of black powder into it in order to produce the necessary explosion.⁸² Laying track on Devil’s Slide occurred where Highway 1 traverses the bluff today.⁸³ A landslide had been known to have taken place here during the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake. Evidence suggested Devil’s Slide’s unstable nature had actually been present for thousands of years.

A 1913 promotional piece for the Railroad, explained what it was like for the adventurous to travel this part of the trip down the coast:

Wonders on this Ocean Shore excursion never cease! Leaving Tobin [the stone railroad station that still exists], the railroad is built on great cliffs for several miles around Pedro Mountain, feats of engineering that amaze one. Far below, the tireless breakers dash with tremendous force against the cliffs, throwing great volumes of water skyward.

Here we pass one of the most interesting objects of the trip, Point Rogers, a great rock of many colored strata, rivaling in beauty the world-renowned Rock of Gibraltar. Then comes the only tunnel on the line, which is broad and has a double track, bored through four hundred feet of solid rock.

The eerie sensation experienced while riding around these few miles of bluff-built railway leaves us when we swing in from the shore line for a short distance to enter a succession of deep rock cuts, after which come the rolling foothills of the Coast Range mountains and the resort cities. . .

On May 28, 1908, the first passenger train reached Montara,⁸⁴ and on June 23, the rails reached Granada. By October, the railroad was operational to Tunitas Creek. Only 26 miles separated the northern tracks from the southern construction head at Swanton. In the meantime income was being produced. Freight service for the farmers became a reality as did passenger traffic. In fact the railroad was running four trains a day between San Francisco and Tunitas and as many as six on weekends. It is reported that 3,000 passengers were served on some Sundays.

As stated, land sale was to be the big money maker, and by 1908, an impressive advertising campaign had been launched aiding scores of salesmen, setting forth to convince lot buyers of the great advantages of owning real estate along the tracks and beaches. In fact individuals put down payments on 20,000 of these lots between San Francisco and Tunitas, in what was the greatest spree of property transaction thus far in San Mateo County history. Undoubtedly, new people made the move, relocating to the Coastside, promoted as free of congestion and earthquakes.⁸⁵ Artist colonies were even established at Montara and Tunitas.

However, San Francisco remained where the action was. Within three years of the earthquake, the City was nearly completely rebuilt, in fact, as a bigger, better metropolis. And so, most of the construction and investment activity focused on the City. While many lots were sold on the San Mateo County Coastside, there was not much actual building going on.

Another disturbing factor was the 26-mile gap. Passengers wishing to reach Santa Cruz had to disembark from the train at Tunitas and get aboard Stanley Steamer touring cars, which then hooked up with the railroad at Swanton. In the early months of 1908, the company sought to sell bonds to create enough capital to finish the work. On March 28, two thousand came out to hear former Lieutenant Governor W.T. Jeter, the President of the Bank of Santa Cruz, endorse the project in the south. At San Francisco, there was a similar rally.⁸⁶ Unfortunately for the Railroad, not enough bonds were sold. Meanwhile the income of the company was not adequate to offset construction cost debt. By the fall of 1909, the Ocean Shore was bankrupt, and in June of 1910, J. Downey Harvey was replaced as general manager. On January 17, 1911, the railroad was sold for \$1,135,000 to a committee of its bondholders. Thus began a series of ownership transactions involving the company, as the Railroad, sadly, remained unprofitable.

The biggest setback for the Ocean Shore leadership was that the real estate scheme never worked out. Many who had made down payments on lots, recognized this real estate bubble for what it was and stopped making payments. The land reverted back to the Land Company. One observer passing through the Half Moon Bay area in 1911, wrote of the empty “new-born ‘cities’” (Granada, Moss Beach, etc.): that the only real

evidence of their “existence was to be known mainly by pitiful little cement sidewalks, already bulging and broken.”⁸⁷ Half Moon Bay itself, which had a population of about 1,000 at the start of the excitement in 1905, still had the same number of people afterwards. In fact as late as 1940, its population was about 1,000.

Still the Ocean Shore Railroad functioned and served the Coastside in ways that no entity had before. Despite all the financial problems, passenger and freight trains continued to operate, although not often on schedule.⁸⁸ In 1910, the Ocean Shore won the contract for delivering mail along its route. That year, it broke its own record. During a one-week period, it hauled 7,200 tons of hay grown by local farmers. In 1911, 250 carloads of artichokes were hauled from Half Moon Bay to San Francisco. The next year, this volume doubled.

By early 1912, it appeared that the Railroad might recover. New general manager Lee Landis seemed to instill confidence, and for the first time, trains were actually running on time.⁸⁹

By 1914, Coastsiders were moving close to all their agricultural products by railroad instead of by ocean steamer. In total, the Ocean Shore carried 300,000 tons of freight and 200,000 passengers that year.⁹⁰ As for the effect the railroad had on general Coastside growth, although the permanent population of the Coastside was not expanding (The *Coastside Comet* estimated that the number of people on the Coast at 1,500 to 2,000 in 1914), the number of people here doubled during the summer months, as vacationers used the Ocean Shore to visit the beaches. As late as 1916, the railroad was still operating 10 engines, 27 passenger coaches, two observation cars and 139 freight cars.

However, there still were troubles. Recurrent landslides affected service. One, which hit the tracks at Devil’s Slide on January 15, 1916, knocked out the Railroad until March 4. Nearly a mile of roadbed had to be repaired at a cost of \$300,000.⁹¹

Yet more difficult to overcome was competition from automobiles and gasoline-powered trucks. At first, perhaps no one could have even imagined it. One of the first motorized excursions using the old Half Moon Bay-Colma Road over Montara Mountain occurred in 1912 and was so adventurous that it made headlines. The automobile, a Studebaker-Flanders Pathfinder, had to climb 1,000 feet on grades as steep as 20%. The route was mostly characterized by hairpin turns. The narrow road was pocked with ruts as deep as 13 inches. Two years later, *Motoring Magazine* indicated road conditions had not improved. It admitted: “There is no road running along the ocean that is more interesting, more grand and sublime than this road.” However, the article lamented: “It is. . . almost impossible, except for the expert, to drive on.” It gave details regarding the worst of the hairpin turns near the top of Devil’s Slide: “The grade and

turns are of such a nature, having been laid out for the use of horses, that it is dangerous for the ordinary car driver.”⁹²

However, the unreliability of the Railroad tested the patience of the Coastsiders, as well. As mentioned, washouts during the winters disrupted service for weeks and even months. Even without winter storms, the trains seemed to have reverted to the previous constant problem of not staying on schedule.

As automobiles became more reliable and less expensive, San Mateo County residents began to clamor for paved roads. They were even happy to pay for them and voted in favor of creating a new one over Montara Mountain. County engineers selected a route above the railroad as a new crossing.⁹³ By 1912, the initial sections of road were already completed -- the first bit of paved highway laid down in the County.⁹⁴ The new 28-mile Coastside Boulevard was voted as one of the most beautiful drives in the country. Locals nicknamed it Pedro Grade Corkscrew, because of its winding nature. Most eventually called it Old Pedro Mountain Road. It opened for automobile traffic on October 31, 1915, and several thousand people from San Francisco made the trip over the mountain to the Coastside.⁹⁵ This highway would come to have quite a reputation for difficult night driving, awful foggy conditions and rock and mud slides caused by winter rains. However crude it was, automobiles now had access to the coast from San Francisco. Gasoline powered trucks were right behind them. Soon farmers were shipping their artichokes, cabbage, sprouts and other crops via the Coastside Boulevard at the expense of the Ocean Shore Railroad. Some farmers pooled their money to purchase trucks.⁹⁶ Another industry, the commercial fishing business, benefitted greatly by truck transportation to San Francisco as well. The Half Moon Bay-Colma Road, now made obsolete by Coastside Boulevard, was abandoned in 1917.⁹⁷

Other bits of highway construction in the County with ramifications for the Coastside included the completion of a new road from San Mateo to Half Moon Bay in 1916.⁹⁸ The “Road of Enchantment” was also opened that year. It went from Woodside to La Honda.

By 1920, the leadership and financiers of the Ocean Shore Railroad had to have taken notice that railroads across the country were losing tourist and commuter passengers to automobiles and the farm product business to trucks. For their particular line, the 26-mile gap to Tunitas had not been bridged and probably never would. The inclination of voters, and in particular San Mateo County voters (who had a long history of conflict with railroads), to open their wallets and help automobiles and trucks compete with them by building roads with tax dollars had to be galling. Private investors were disinclined to place yet more money behind this apparently failing business. At that moment, probably not fully aware of management’s frustrations, workers for the

Ocean Shore went on strike. They would never return to their jobs, because the company's leadership decided to give-up. On July 27, 1920, management filed an application with the Railroad Commission to abandon the south end of the tracks. On August 12, they did likewise for the north end. Before 1922, the railroad's rolling stock had been sold, and the rails had been taken up.⁹⁹

There are many visible reminders of the Ocean Shore. Besides its cuts in hills and roadbeds along ledges, some of the stations survive. Vallemar station, on Highway 1 in Pacifica, exists virtually unchanged on its outside. It is a bar and restaurant. Tobin station, just before Shelter Cove in Pacifica, also maintains much of its original appearance. Named for Coastside property owner and San Francisco banker Richard M. Tobin, it is now a single family home. Montara station, built in 1906, is at 2nd and Main in that little community. It is also a private residence. The large Granada Station has been altered through the years for use as offices and then a restaurant. It is visible from Highway 1 on Alhambra in El Granada. The Areleta Park Station on Railroad Avenue in Half Moon Bay has been rebuilt as a house. The Half Moon Bay station has been moved at least twice. It currently serves as offices for the Johnston House Foundation, south of town.

Perhaps the most remarkable architectural reminder of the railroad era on the coast was not built by the Ocean Shore. In 1908, prominent attorney Henry McCloskey (former Congressman Pete McCloskey's grandfather) built a large home on the hillside in Pacifica that locals have nicknamed "The Castle." Its strange, medieval appearance, complete with turrets and gargoyles, is truly unique. The house is virtually unchanged from 100 years ago.

The futility that surrounded the Ocean Shore's leadership was well-known. Interference from the Southern Pacific Railroad, an earthquake, bankruptcy, difficult reorganizations, landslides and, finally, automobiles, trucks and publically financed roads to support them, frustrated the company at every bend. The projected towns that it had promised to build remained lots and blocks of undeveloped land for generations, recognizable legacies of failure. Coastsiders themselves referred to the stumbling railroad as "the line of rust." Moreover despite the Railroad and despite the new roads and autos and trucks, the Coastside mostly looked the way it did before the excitement of 1905.

However, from the long term prospective, the Ocean Shore Railroad did break the isolation of the Coast -- albeit not as quickly as most everyone at the time wished. Perhaps from the standpoint of today, the slower growth that occurred had favorable aspects. Many factors that plagued the Railroad, hindered transportation by autos and trucks as well and allowed much of the coast to remain a beautiful, natural place: very much appreciated by thousands of residents and millions of visitors today.

The over 55 proposed housing tracts, laid out between Edgemar and Tunitas, did not manifest themselves immediately, but some people did settle and began unique, affordable communities of great character.

As for the farmer, without question, the Railroad broke the isolation of the coast. Products could be brought to market easier, faster and more reliably than before. The introduction of automobiles, trucks and their roads replaced the Railroad, but even in death, the Railroad continued to contribute. When a new highway from San Francisco down the coast became a necessity, the hill cuts, road bends and ledges created by the Ocean Shore Railroad were of immense benefit to planners and builders. The hotel and restaurant owners, real estate salesmen and promoters that were leftover from the railroad days became the principle advocates for an improved highway system for Coastsides and San Mateo County and California on the whole.

These advocates were most vociferous only five years after the completion of Coastsides Boulevard, when the agitation started up again. Coastsiders pointed out how the eroding surface and grade of the road on Montara Mountain was already, in 1920, a problem. Heavy truck traffic had evidently initiated the deterioration. Moreover, the drainage system never seemed to function correctly. Washouts and landslides caused closures in the winter months. Even when the conditions were right, the curving nature of the drive made the trip slow. Old timers still tell of becoming car sick as children,¹⁰⁰ while sitting out the “Corkscrew” of “Old Pedro Grade.” Locals began lobbying government officials to abandon Coastsides Boulevard and instead convert the Ocean Shore Railroad roadbed at Montara Mountain into an automobile highway.

After all, it appeared that the automobile had come to stay. On January 15, 1927, the Dumbarton Bridge, touching down on the southern end of the San Mateo County Bayside, became the first automobile crossing of the San Francisco Bay. In December of 1927, work began on the San Mateo-Hayward Bridge, which at 7.1 miles in length, would be the longest automobile bridge in the world when completed.

Recognizing that the time had come for a better coastal thoroughfare, in 1928, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Cruz counties came together to form Joint Highway District Number 9. The District’s plans called for building a 75-mile highway through the Coastsides that would, as suggested by Coastsiders, utilize the roadbeds laid out by the Ocean Shore Railroad. Funding would be raised through the state and federal governments.¹⁰¹ Thus Coastsides Boulevard’s days were numbered. The State of California took it over in 1933, designating it State Highway 56. After World War II, it was abandoned.¹⁰²

The federal government accepted the task of creating Highway 1. The first step was to negotiate with the Ocean Shore Railroad for the required legal rights. Some of the

issues were resolved, some not. At Montara Mountain no agreement could be made concerning the value of the roadbed around San Pedro Point and through the tunnel. The highway builders designed an eastern route instead, that led up to Devil's Slide, as the road is known to us today. Construction at Montara Mountain began in 1935 and was completed in 1937. Touted as one of the most beautiful highways in the world, even before it was finished, San Mateo County zoned this section of Highway 1, "scenic," thus outlawing billboards and hot dog stands. Greyhound bus service began almost immediately and served the Coastside until 1976 when Sam Trans took over the route.¹⁰³

And so, the Ocean Shore Railroad, which actually operated just 13 years, forever changed the history of the Coastside by its own train excursions and by showing highway engineers the way. The immediate ramification of the railroad was to vastly assist two Coastside legitimate industries, agriculture and commercial fishing. However, there was a third. The new highways, that the railroad inspired, allowed for automobile and truck transportation to become a reality. In the 1920s, the bootleggers and rumrunners on the coast would use the new roads to facilitate another industry for the Coastside -- this one an illegal one.

PROHIBITION DAYS AND RELATED ASPECTS

In 1929, Ray (or Rey -- spelled both ways in court documents) Mori was arrested for selling a few alcoholic drinks. Beyond that, the Mori family remained outside legal prosecution during the Prohibition period of San Mateo County History. However, evidence of thousands of gallons of illegal hooch confiscated from the family properties, testaments from local residents, newspaper reports and other sources plainly indicate the family's position as kingpins of bootlegging on the San Mateo County North Coast.

BACKGROUND FOR CORRUPTION (CONTEXTUAL)

Illegal yes -- but out of place with most neighbors up and down the Coastside -- no. The opportunities for making some easy money was exploited by many local residents. The Moris certainly had advantages in becoming involved with the new bootlegging "industry." Their Mori Point property was snuggled in on the rugged coastline with dark landing spots that encouraged partnerships with rumrunners. The place was also right for their own entrepreneurial initiatives, like operating a speakeasy.

Certainly the Moris were aware that working outside of the law was practically a historical legacy for San Mateo County residents by the 1920s. In fact, the County was born out of corrupt politics. At the moment of California statehood, in 1850, the Peninsula was included within San Francisco County, but then in 1856 an outlaw group of San Francisco criminals and political types saw to the creation of a new county to

suit their needs. While their reign on the Peninsula lasted only days, the tradition was long lasting.

San Mateo County, being such a rural place, adjacent to cosmopolitan, sophisticated and vigorous San Francisco, became an outlet of sorts. San Franciscans who could not get away with something in the City, could cross the county line, where law enforcement was nil, and get away with it in San Mateo County. For example, when in 1859, United States Senator David Broderick and former California Supreme Court Justice David Terry had a disagreement over the slavery issue, they tried to duel in San Francisco County, but the fight was broken up by the Sheriff. So the two agreed to meet in San Mateo County, and just across the county line, in today's Daly City, they shot it out. Terry proved the better aim, and David Broderick died in what was probably the most famous duel in western history.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, nothing much had changed regarding this relationship between the counties. In 1900, the population of San Mateo County was still not 13,000. Gambling operations were the underground vice activities of the day, and they existed in quantity on the Peninsula especially in North San Mateo County which was most convenient for San Franciscans. However, the economic opportunities brought about by Prohibition made all the dabbling of the past pale in comparison.

In 1919, the United States Congress approved the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution prohibiting the sale of alcoholic beverages. On January 16, 1920, Congress passed the Volstead Act which allowed for the enforcement of Prohibition, which became the law of the land until repeal of the Amendment in 1933. In 1922, California passed the Wright Act, its own law to enforce Prohibition, and punish violators. In 1926, San Mateo County enhanced its own efforts by passing an ordinance to assist crime busters. The San Mateo County law made it illegal for proprietors of business establishments to keep their doors locked during business hours. Reading between the lines, raiders of speakeasies became tired of having to break down doors.¹⁰⁴ Passing all this legislation was one thing. Enforcement was quite another.

For one thing, San Mateo County had a large immigrant population that had no sympathy for the Prohibition protagonists whatsoever. Prohibition was born out of the Progressive movement at the turn of the century that had been anti-immigration and anti-Catholic in a variety of ways. This included criticism of the heavy consumption of alcoholic beverages by the newcomers. In a County that was one-tenth born in Italy, with many Portuguese, Irish and other Europeans, whose drinking was deemed a cultural necessity and right, the new laws seemed simply a nuisance at first, but then became a lucrative industry for quite a few people, immigrant or not.

Almost overnight the Peninsula became home to speakeasies (illegal clubs, central to

a booming, semi-clandestine entertainment business) and moonshiners (those concocting their own beverages and then selling them). Organized criminals recognized the rugged 40-mile San Mateo County Coast as a convenient spot to unload supplies of hooch, mostly Canadian whiskey. These were the rumrunners who utilized fast little ships to dart in and out of the coves of the coast where waiting trucks could get the major part of the liquor up to thirsty San Francisco. Instead of having to worry about locals attempting to assist the law, the Coastside welcomed the rumrunners as providing economic opportunity. Coastside boys earned their first money working for the rumrunners, helping them unload boats and then load trucks. Older locals drove the trucks. Some like “Boss” Patroni and the Moris came to understandings with the crime lords and provided safe havens for the illegal activities.

Sadly as these practices spread and became more and more acceptable, other types of destructive hustles grew too. Prostitution and gambling proliferated as they never had before.¹⁰⁵ Law enforcement problems became increasingly complicated and difficult to solve. In fact, local authorities, although supported by state and federal agents, never got the upperhand on the Peninsula during Prohibition, leading many on the other side to brag that San Mateo County was the “wettest” county in the United States (during those days “dry” meant without booze; “wet” meant with it).

In fact, how much cooperation the federal officials (the “prohis”¹⁰⁶) actually received from locals is debatable. The laws were unpopular, and the bootleggers learned how to spread the profits around, enough so that many in authority had reason to look the other way. Particularly notorious were the popular police chief of South San Francisco, Louis Balloni, who came to office in 1924, and County Sheriff Jim McGrath, who won elections throughout the period.

There were busts, and even the Coast Guard got into the act, chasing the rumrunners off the coast, but the law did little to turn off the spigot. In fact, of more concern for the established criminals were hijackers who would steal the hooch on the beaches from them or hold up their trucks.

The few spectacular raids that occurred only proved the extent of illegal activity, and that not all of it was happening on the Coastside. In June of 1922, prohis burst into a rum factory in Colma and destroyed 13 moonshine stills that had the capacity of producing 1,000 gallons of liquor a day for San Francisco’s entertainment needs.¹⁰⁷ Another Colma factory with similar capacity was busted in 1925. All ethnicities seemed to be in on it. In 1927, San Bruno police smashed a Chinese rice gin operation that catered to the Bay Area’s large Asian market. In 1931, authorities raided the J.R. Roberts soda factory in South San Francisco that turned out to be a front for one of the biggest illegal distilleries in California. Amazingly, the factory was owned by the South San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. Investigators found it to be the largest

source of booze for the State of Nevada. The business was so robust that a spur line to the Southern Pacific Railroad was built right up to the factory's loading ramp.¹⁰⁸

As flagrant as the activities were on the Bayside, on the Coastside avoiding Prohibition law became a way of life. After all, the coast with its hidden coves, under cover of fog and darkness, was the perfect place for mastermind rumrunners like Thomas Murphy and Paul Rubio Pane to land their Canadian whiskey. For the locals, rumrunning operations meant well paying jobs. Meanwhile bootlegging itself gave renewed hope to restaurant, boarding house, hotel and inn owners. The same year the Ocean Shore Railroad went belly up, the Volstead Act passed. The new hope was that even though the trains would no longer bring tourists, perhaps a new type of patron would frequent Coastside visitor businesses, especially those excursionists that could afford a drink. With all the hooch being landed right on the beaches, it did not take much to acquire some for sale locally. These businesses in fact adapted readily to the new customers, who arrived by automobile with a lot of money to spend.

Rumrunning, speakeasies, moonshine factories: collectively, this was an industry that made millions of dollars.¹⁰⁹ Because the income was not taxable, and records were kept secret, how many millions is lost to history. However, anecdotal reports clearly state that illegal alcohol sales became the biggest business on the Coastside during Prohibition and perhaps for the entire County. For example, in 1923, newspaper accounts revealed that in just a few months, 75,000 cases of Canadian whiskey had been successfully landed at Half Moon Bay and in the Mori Point area. In other words, six million dollars worth of booze had been landed, seemingly without a hitch, on the San Mateo County coast and then trucked up to San Francisco.¹¹⁰

Even after the prohis made a successful raid on the Coastside, it did not mean that their captured haul would be safe in their own hands. For instance in September of 1921, agents seized a truck loaded with booze belonging to a group of Half Moon Bay speakeasies. While driving the truck up to San Francisco, they were ambushed by bandits. The lawmen got away initially, but the hoodlums possessed a fast touring car and caught them on Pedro Mountain Road. The government's group was overpowered, and the truck and liquor ended up in criminal hands again.¹¹¹

Federal agents learned that in order to deal with the outlaws of the coast they had to be more heavily armed. In 1923, lead federal field agent, W.R. Paget, led a raid against a rumrunning operation at Año Nuevo Island. He had his men carry sawed-off shotguns. Even with these lethal weapons, after his men closed in on the smuggling scene, the rumrunners fought back. A wild gun battle ensued. It did not end until the bad guys ran out of ammunition. Paget seized 241 cases of scotch, worth nearly \$22,000.

The United States Coast Guard found rumrunners at sea fast and well-armed. Off of

Half Moon Bay, Christmas Eve, 1925, a cutter engaged the rumrunning vessel *Gaviota* in a battle. In most cases, the sleek rumrunning ships picked flight rather than fight, but this time, the *Gaviota* decided to stand its ground. The Coast Guard won out, captured the *Gaviota* and later put it to work assisting the federal campaign against bootlegging on the coast.¹¹²

More dangerous to the rumrunners than occasional federal interference were hijackers. Reports of the day indicate that meetings between bootleggers and hijackers were frequent and often violent and sometimes witnessed by many. One early morning in Half Moon Bay in 1925, the entire town was awakened to gunfire when hijackers tried to capture bootleggers driving a Cadillac. The hijackers managed to wound one of the bootleggers, but the latter got away. At Purissima, the bootleggers stopped to transfer their cargo of booze into a waiting Buick. Two boys driving a Ford truck happened upon them. The bootleggers ordered the boys to load the Buick at gunpoint and then sped off. The boys noted that the Buick was especially equipped for this business with 1,500 pound overload springs.¹¹³

Bootlegging operation sites, close to GGNRA properties, include Seal Cove at Moss Beach, a favorite landing spot for rumrunners, and Frank Torres' speakeasy above the cove on the bluff, known then as Frank's Roadhouse and today as the Distillery. These are just west of the National Park's *Rancho Corral de Tierra*.

In the same vicinity, at Princeton, were several operations. Among the most well-known were "Boss" Patroni's wharf, for rumrunners, and his restaurant, which was a speakeasy. (More on "Boss" Patroni can be found in the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* portion of this study.) The Princeton Inn was perhaps most notorious place in the little town, as it was a celebrated brothel.

Southwest of Parklands at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*, at Miramar, once known as Amespport, there were a couple of important establishments as well. Mimi Cowely's hotel, grocery store, speakeasy and whorehouse was located at the site of today's Miramar Beach Restaurant. Built about 1917, it was one of the businesses that made the change from Ocean Shore Railroad customers to thirsty motorists of the Prohibition era. The same can be said for Joseph S. Miguel's Palace Miramar Hotel, constructed in 1916 for \$30,000. Some called this speakeasy the most opulent hotel on the San Mateo County Coast.¹¹⁴

ACTIVITIES OF THE MORI FAMILY

The site of illegal Prohibition activities on GGNRA land is mostly at Mori Point. Here at the end of Mori's Point Road, sat the Mori's Point Inn, that overlooked the ocean. By all accounts, it functioned as a well-known speakeasy. Evidence suggests that farmer Stefano Mori's sons Jack and Steve built this roadhouse at the turn of the century.

The year 1899 has been used as the date of initial presence because a map indicates a road extension to the site at that time. No map actually shows any structure there until 1949. In fact only three residences are shown on maps at the Point before 1915, but none at the Inn site. Newspaper reports cite Steve Mori as managing the Inn in 1910 during a shooting incident. So it had to have existed at least that far back.

However, local historians have given 1880 and even 1878 as the date when the business started. In a 1960 ad, operators of the Inn promoted it as: “A Coastside favorite since 1881.” It is possible that the Inn occupied one of the three original ranch buildings and then moved to the Mori Road beach site after the turn of the century (or later on, to perhaps better serve Ocean Shore Railroad passengers). In its heyday, the building included 21 rooms for overnight accommodations, a bar, dancehall, restaurant and Italian delicatessen.

The Mori’s were not immune to trouble even before Prohibition. In a highly publicized case in 1910, Steve Mori shot and killed a San Francisco barber for trespassing. He was taken to court but escaped punishment a month later as the result of a hung jury.¹¹⁵

Prohibition brought opportunity for the Mori clan. Jack Mori fell in with the rum-runners and established a sophisticated set up to facilitate the unloading process. He installed warning lights and a marine telephone system for communications. He had a powerful automobile engine hooked up with a cable to pull boats used as lighters back and forth from ships. It was said that a freighter could be unloaded in one night.¹¹⁶ To understand the extent of this operation, during a raid in 1923, federal agents confiscated 24,000 cases of scotch from the Mori farm. Prohibition had driven the price of this spirit from 50¢ to \$7.00 a bottle, making this haul worth \$2 million.¹¹⁷

In the meantime, another of Jack’s brothers, Ray (Rey?), with his wife Maria ran the old Francisco Sanchez Adobe up San Pedro Valley as a restaurant and speakeasy. In fact old-timers who visit the Adobe, which is now a museum, regale the docents there about how it was additionally a bordello. Interior nail patterns on the second floor of the house suggest that many small rooms were installed at one point, seemingly corroborating this description. Old champagne glasses are frequently unearthed on the grounds surrounding the structure, indicating parties were taking place there.

That the Mori’s Point Inn functioned as a speakeasy was proven in August of 1924, when prohis raided it and took away \$50,000 in hooch. Nevertheless proprietor Jack Mori seemed to stay out of the clutches of the law. However, on August 21, 1929, his brother Ray was arrested for selling booze. In September, he was indicted in United States District Court for violation of Prohibition laws including “keeping for sale . . . intoxicating liquor . . . 20 bottles, more or less,” and “. . . sale of . . . four drinks of whis-

key.” Ray pleaded guilty for selling the four drinks and got four month probation and a \$225 fine.

Locals claim that Jack’s troubles with federal agencies over his rumrunning business eventually forced him out as “boss” of the Inn. By 1932, Ray and Marie were running it.

In 1933, Prohibition, recognized for the failed experiment that it was, ended when Congress circumvented the Eighteenth Amendment by passing the 21st Amendment to the Constitution. While most the nation celebrated, on the San Mateo County Coast-side this was not good news. Many lamented that their “Golden Era” was over.¹¹⁸ Two national forces hurt the coast’s economy: the loss of business from illegal alcohol sales and the onset of the Great Depression. It certainly became a quieter coast. Many went back to farming. Others went into the new commercial fishing industry. Some found jobs working on the new federally financed Highway 1 project. Everyone had to work harder. The days of easy money and fast living were over.

At Mori Point a fishing village was present at least as early as 1938 when famous Depression Era photographer Dorothea Lange photographed it as part of her work for the government. Apparently, the village which existed behind the quarry, occupied a place on the Point all through the 1930s and into the 1940s.

SAN MATEO COUNTY STRUGGLES WITH CRIME AFTER THE PROHIBITION (CONTEXTUAL)

As for San Mateo County on the whole, its struggles with lawlessness did not go away with Prohibition. Vice crime developed during the previous era gave gangsters new sources of income -- especially gambling. In fairness, gambling manifested itself in a variety of ways down the Peninsula -- some quite legal, however, some not.

As early as 1899, Tanforan Racetrack at San Bruno allowed betting on races. In 1908, laws outlawed gambling, and the track went into decline. However, on October 31, 1931, Greyhound racing was inaugurated at Belmont. Later investigation revealed that the operators, the Bayshore Kennel Club, acted as a front for big-name racketeers from Chicago, including associates of Al Capone. The next year, the Baden Kennel Club opened a second San Mateo County track at South San Francisco, just north of Tanforan. An entire city, Bayshore City, was incorporated in the north eastern corner of the County in 1932 to support the dog racing industry there. It disincorporated after two years when its track closed.

Legitimate horse racing received a major boost in 1933 when betting was made legal again, through the pari-mutuel system. Tanforan returned to successful form, while down in San Mateo, a second track at Bay Meadows was built in 1934.

While both tracks functioned in legal ways for the most part, illegal bookie operations and other criminal activities did accompany the race tracks in the County. More notorious were gambling houses operating completely outside the law. For example, Emilio Georgetti's Willow Tree in Colma was reported, in 1938, to be the most luxurious casino in California and the largest of its kind west of the Mississippi. Although it operated in a public way, County authorities seemed unaware of its existence.

Out on the Coastside the gangster element held on by controlling the artichoke business. By the time of Prohibition's repeal, organized crime's control of this farm product was entrenched. Farmers not willing to cooperate had their trucks hijacked, crates of the vegetable stolen right out of their fields and warehouses, and their crops damaged by machete wielding henchmen.

Because of the confused situation, with some farmers cooperating with the mobsters, while some farmers did not, and then having rival thugs raiding the "protected" crops of cooperating farmers, it is impossible to tell from today's standpoint just who was on the side of right and who was on the side of wrong. The record tells us there were "artichoke vigilantes"¹¹⁹ who patrolled the Coastside's back roads, armed by the County Sheriff with sawed-off shotguns. Their presence neither ended the pilfering nor the vandalizing nor the violence.

The situation gained national attention. In New York City, Mayor Fiorello La Guardia recognized that artichokes sold in his city were handled by a national network of mobsters who used extortion, kidnapping and even, once, murder to control the crop. At that time, 1935, nearly 95% of the artichokes grown in America came from the coastal strip around Half Moon Bay. Saying Half Moon Bay artichokes in New York was the same as saying Mafia artichokes. The vegetable was particularly popular in New York's Italian neighborhoods. La Guardia and prosecutor Thomas Dewey estimate that the racket, just in their city, was worth \$500,000 a year. The mayor made the radical move of declaring the "sale display and possession"¹²⁰ of artichokes to be illegal in New York City on December 21, 1935. Dewey went on to build his reputation as a racket buster. He became governor of New York and twice ran for President as a Republican candidate, in 1944 and 1948.

LAST DAYS OF THE MORIS

At Mori Point, things seemed to have gotten a lot quieter with the end of Prohibition. After Ray Mori died, his widow Marie ran the Inn until the early 1940s. She remarried, to Lloyd Jones, and moved to Palm Springs where she eventually passed on too. Doug Hart came to operate the establishment for some years. An accountant, he started by handling the books for the Moris. After some time he leased the Inn to others. In the hands of Doug Hart, the Inn took on a sort of traditional but still informal character, beloved by many locals. Patrons particularly enjoyed Hart's Sunday brunch

Dancing Friday Evenings Too!



By popular demand we're expanding our entertainment program to Friday evenings too . . . Live music.

A Coastside Favorite
Since 1881

DANCING • COCKTAILS

For Reservations:
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Attractive Rates for
Parties and Social Clubs



**MORI'S
POINT**

6-9-1960
6/9/60 (3)

Fig. 4.4: 1960 advertisement for dancing on Friday evenings at Mori's Point.

at the Inn. About 1956, the Inn's clientele may have been enlarged by the addition of a swimming or fishing pond at Laguna Salada. In addition, just to the north, the Fairway Park subdivision was completed in 1958.

A 1960 newspaper ad for the establishment evokes a "gay 1890s" sort of an image for the Inn, with cartoon characters dressed accordingly and the phrase "Since 1881" featured. "Live music," dancing, cocktails and special rates for parties and clubs were all part of the pitch.

However, the leaseholders that followed Hart did not seem to have his colorful character. The building fell into disrepair, was condemned and shut down to the public.

On February 26, 1966, the *Redwood City Tribune* reported "Historic Mori's Point bar and restaurant, overlooking the Pacific Ocean, burned to the ground last night in a spectacular fire visible for miles." The building had been vacated three months before, by the condemnation order. The Inn was apparently owned by an entity called the Mori's Point Corporation at that time. They had planned for a remodeling, according to the *Tribune*, but the "cost was too high."¹²¹ The structure had been slated to be burned down by fire officials perhaps as a training venture. Lost were the bar, kitchen equipment, antique headboards and additional furnishings which were supposed to be auctioned off the next week. The pieces were valued at \$20,000.

A Fairway Park resident alerted the Fire Department of the blaze at 6:40 p.m. Firemen fought the blaze for 15 to 20 minutes before the fire chief decided it was a lost cause and let it burn to the ground. Later, Fire Captain James Evans stated he felt the fire had started under "suspicious circumstances."¹²² He pointed out that the conflagration had started in a place in the building ideal for completely burning it down.

That week, *Pacifica Tribune* Editor Pat Lynn summarized the incident:

Historic old Mori's, not to be outdone by the wrecker's hammer, went out in a blaze of glory all her own Friday night. The old landmark died the way she lived -- in a bawdy and spectacular fashion. It was the hottest Friday night for the old restaurant-bar which dates back to 1880, and even a few old time firemen shed an invisible tear at her demise.

SHARP PARK AND THE INTERNMENT CAMP (CONTEXTUAL)

Just north of the National Park Service's Mori Point property is the Sharp Park Golf Course. During World War II the United States government used these San Francisco-owned recreation lands as an internment camp. Unlike its neighbor, Tanforan to the east in San Bruno, this facility operated throughout the War. Tanforan was an "Assembly Center," -- that is -- a place where people of Japanese heritage were brought until the more permanent camps had been completed in interior of the country. Tanforan has certainly generated more historical attention through the years, probably because of the large number of people (10,000) that were held there. Sharp Park detained far fewer and also had persons of other heritages, besides Japanese, on site.

The Sharp family of San Francisco had owned this acreage since the 1870s.¹²³ George F. Sharp, a San Francisco attorney, was part of a legal team interested in a railroad for the coast, but died before construction of the Ocean Shore Railroad began. In advance of his death, he instructed his wife, Honora, that he wished something tangible be done for the City in his memory. She passed away not long after, but the Sharps' executors abided by the couple's wishes. They settled on creating the golf course. Well-known golf course architect Alister MacKenzie designed the links, blending the sport with the natural surroundings. Landscaper John McLaren, who had done so much for Golden Gate Park, planted the many Monterey cypress trees still present. Angus McSweeney of Willis Polk's famed architectural firm designed the Mission Revival style clubhouse, also still on the property. The course opened to the public in 1932.¹²⁴

The Sharps' donation was an extensive piece of real estate that contained more than just the eighteen hole links. During the Depression years of the 1930s, San Francisco built and operated a camp for boys without homes on the eastern section of the park. The City offered these "older boys"¹²⁵ room, board, medical care and 25¢ a day for working in the park, doing such chores as planting John McLaren's trees.

As World War II began in Europe, J. Edgar Hoover, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, noted how the Nazis successfully used German loyalists in places like Poland, Belgium, Holland, France and, most notoriously, Norway. He lobbied for the federal government to be prepared, if the United States entered war, to target those that might try sabotage, espionage or other activities meant to undermine national security. As early as September, 1939, a federal Detention Program was in place. In 1940, Congress passed a complimentary Alien Registration Act. In the months before the Pearl Harbor attack, of December 7, 1941, Sharp Park had already been selected as a site to hold detainees. It was designated as an internment camp for German, Italian and Japanese people who might pose a threat. It was to originally function as a temporary holding area, until permanent arrangements could be made for the particular persons in question.

In early 1942, San Francisco turned over the boys camp to the federal government. On March 30, the internment camp opened. Some 193 people from the Angel Island Internment Camp (which had been damaged by a fire) were the first to be housed at Sharp Park. Quonset huts were erected to incarcerate between 450 and 1,200 possible foreign enemies. It is said that at one time as many as 2,500 were held there. People of German, Italian and Japanese origin spent time at Sharp Park, as did some Mexican, Canadian and Chinese nationals suspected of having anti-American intentions. Stanford professor Yamato Ichikashi remembered the camp at Sharp Park:

The ground is limited by tall iron net-fences and small in area; barracks 20' x 120' are well built and painted outside and inside and are regularly arranged; there are 10 of these for inmates, each accommodating about 40, divided into 5 rooms for 8 people each; if doubled decked [bunk beds] 80 can be put in.¹²⁶

After Italy surrendered in 1943, Italian detainees were released. A dozen internment camps kept 25,000 Germans interned within the United States. Sharp Park was one of them and held Germans and Japanese detainees until the camp closed in 1946.

Today, visitors have trouble imagining that an internment camp existed at Sharp Park. The site is largely covered up by an archery range (a rifle range was at one time here as well). Old-timers can point out beaten concrete steps leading to non-existent buildings, a water cistern filled with dirt and a garbage pit behind bushes as the last vestiges of this World War II story. According to locals, one of the Quonset huts was moved from the site and is now the Sharp Park Co-op nursery.

The Tanforan Assembly Center is today listed as California State Historical Landmark No. 934. It functioned for a few months in 1942 and then was turned over for military use. Sharp Park Internment camp, although smaller than Tanforan, served throughout the War. It possesses no national, state, county nor city historical designation.

MORI POINT PRESERVATION EFFORTS

About the time the Mori Point Inn burned down in 1966, quarry operations at the Point were perceived to be falling off. A 30-year period ensued during which the property sat in limbo. In the meantime, despite its being privately owned, the people of Pacifica used it as an urban park for hiking, bicycling and horseback riding. This unmanaged and unregulated usage had negative impact on the natural resources of the site.¹²⁷ The quarry, itself, became a community gathering place. “Western Days” (later “Frontier Days”) were held here as a weeklong arts and crafts festival that even, at times, included a rodeo. This Rockaway Quarry event ended in 1984 when the property owner refused to grant permission to use it for this purpose.

Naturally, with its beautiful views, Mori Point became the focus of developers who thought about its residential and commercial potential. An emerging environmental movement, meanwhile, rose up in hopes of preserving the Point as open space.

In 1984, matters came to a head when Pacificans voted in favor of a mixed use development that included a conference center.¹²⁸ Four years later, when developer Ron Sette presented his plan, it turned out to be much more of a construction project than what many locals had envisioned. The plan called for a 275-room conference center, two restaurants and as many as 60 houses.¹²⁹

The matter was fought out at Pacifica City Hall, in local newspapers and on community television. Resident Hal Bohner, a local attorney, complained that previously the convention center had not been proposed for the ridge line as now, in 1988, it was. Additionally a proposed equestrian center had been dropped from the original presentation. Pacifican Lynda Martyn asserted that given the chance to vote on this project again, the people of Pacifica would not approve the mixed-use proposal. City Councilman Jon Galehouse pointed out the impact the project might have on the endangered San Francisco garter snakes at Mori Point. He advocated that somehow the property be transferred to the GGNRA.

The controversy consumed the community's interest in April and May of 1988, as citizens took sides in the debate. It was agreed to put the plan up for a vote on November 6, as Measure C. This process stopped the plan but the developers began promoting new ideas. However, after six years, the environmentalists led by Hal Bohner, Michael Rothenberg and Julie Loncelle wore down their opposition.¹³⁰ In 2002, the Trust for Public Land stepped in at auction and outbid new developers.¹³¹ Its purchase paved the way for Mori Point coming into the GGNRA.

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- ⁷³ Wagner, *Last*, p. 19.
- ⁷⁴ May, *Mori*, p. 106.
- ⁷⁵ Wagner, *Last*, p. 17.
- ⁷⁶ Caughman, *California*, p. 171.
- ⁷⁷ Brandt, "Ocean," p. 5.
- ⁷⁸ Postel, *Peninsula*, p. 53.
- ⁷⁹ J. Smeaton Chase, *California Coastal Trails: a Horseback Adventure from Mexico to Oregon in 1911*, The Narrative Press, Santa Barbara, CA, 2001, chapter 18.
- ⁸⁰ Brandt, "Ocean," pp. 7-9.
- ⁸¹ Stanger, *South*, p. 142.
- ⁸² Wagner, *Last*, pp. 39-42.
- ⁸³ VanderWerf, *Montara*, pp. 115-116.
- ⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 131.
- ⁸⁵ Miller, "Evolution," p. 106.
- ⁸⁶ Wagner, *Last*, p. 75.
- ⁸⁷ Chase, *California*, chapter 18.

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- ⁸⁸ Brandt, “Ocean,” p. 11.
- ⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- ⁹⁰ Svanevik, *San Mateo County*, p. 54.
- ⁹¹ Brandt, “Ocean,” p. 15.
- ⁹² As quoted in: VanderWerf, *Montara*, p. 126.
- ⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 145.
- ⁹⁴ Hynding, *From*, p. 171.
- ⁹⁵ VanderWerf, *Montara*, p. 145.
- ⁹⁶ Miller, “Evolution,” p. 117.
- ⁹⁷ VanderWerf, *Montara*, p. 129.
- ⁹⁸ San Mateo County, *San Mateo County*, p. 25.
- ⁹⁹ Wagner, *Last*, p. 9.
- ¹⁰⁰ VanderWerf, *Montara*, p. 47.
- ¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 155-157.
- ¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 150.
- ¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 160-162.
- ¹⁰⁴ Hynding, *From*, p. 212.
- ¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 221-222.
- ¹⁰⁶ Gualtieri, *Half Moon Bay*, pp. 94-96.
- ¹⁰⁷ Svanevik, *San Mateo County*, p. 67.
- ¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 78.
- ¹⁰⁹ San Mateo County, *San Mateo County*, pp. 30-31.
- ¹¹⁰ Hynding, *From*, p. 214.
- ¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 216.
- ¹¹² Morrall, *Half Moon Bay*, pp. 172-73.
- ¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 167-168.
- ¹¹⁴ Smookler, *San Mateo County*, pp. 97, 99.
- ¹¹⁵ May, *Mori*, p. 106.
- ¹¹⁶ Svanevik, *San Mateo County*, p. 69.
- ¹¹⁷ Hynding, *From*, pp. 214-215.
- ¹¹⁸ Morrall, *Half Moon Bay*, p. 176.
- ¹¹⁹ Svanevik, *San Mateo County*, p. 77.
- ¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 83.
- ¹²¹ “Fire Levels Historic Inn at Pacific,” *Redwood City Tribune*, February 26, 1966.
- ¹²² “Mori Point Inn Is Razed,” *San Mateo Times*, February 26, 1966.
- ¹²³ Brown, *Place Names*, p. 79.
- ¹²⁴ Jerry Crow, letter to Mitch Postel, August 15, 2009.
- ¹²⁵ Jim Wagner, “Sharp Park Internment Camp,” unpublished manuscript, June 15, 2008, p. 1.
- ¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- ¹²⁷ May, *Mori Point*, p. 114.
- ¹²⁸ Stanton Samuelson, “Pacifica Project Ripped,” *San Francisco Examiner*, April 27, 1988.
- ¹²⁹ Dave Murphy, “Some Are Still Speechless After Long Snake-vs-Builder Hearing,” *San Mateo Times*, April 26, 1988.
- ¹³⁰ Julie Loncelle, oral history transcription prepared by Perfect Pages, September 18, 2002, pp. 35-36.
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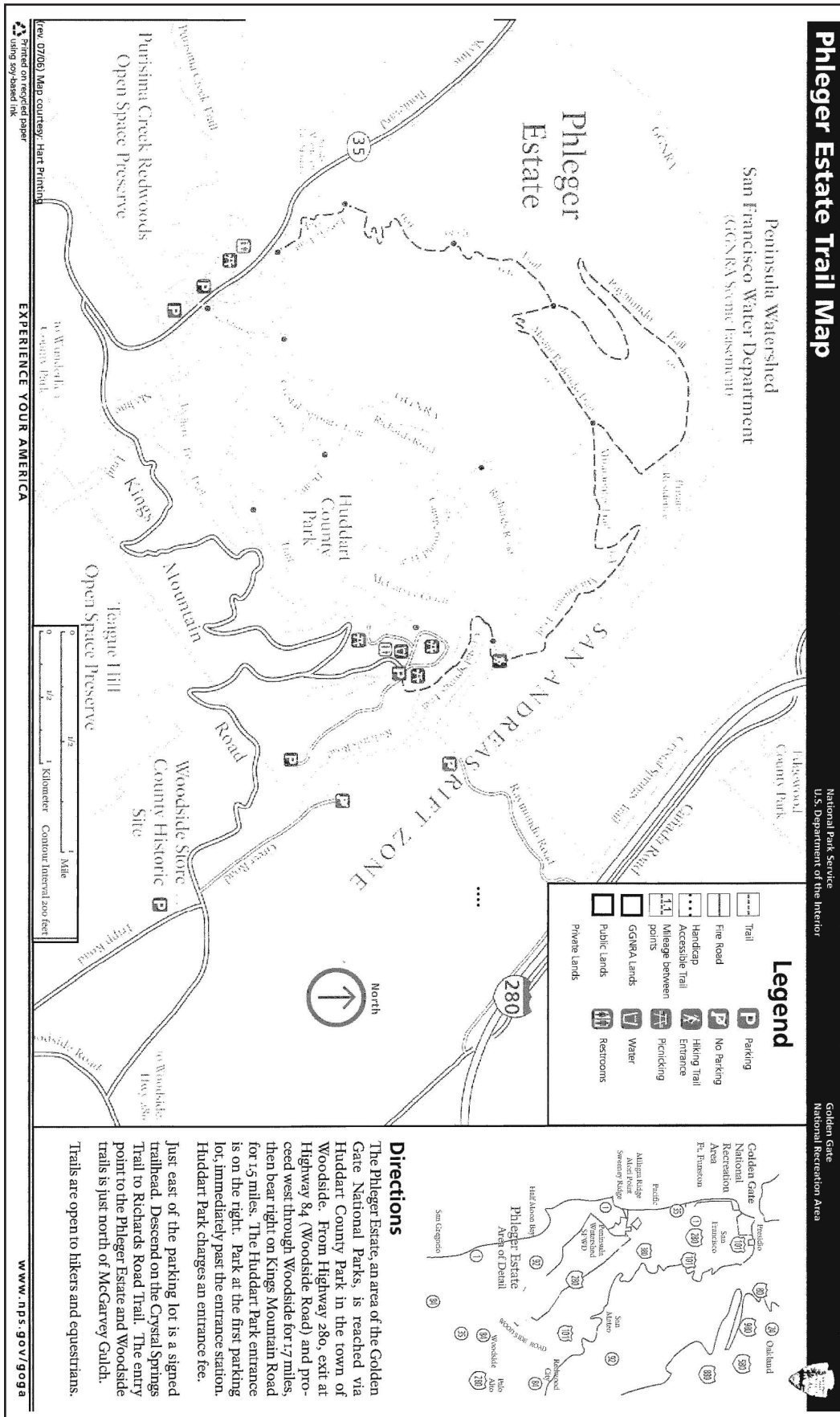


Fig. 5.1: Trail map of the Phleger Estate.

PHLEGER ESTATE

In 1935, Herman and Mary Elena Phleger purchased their Mountain Meadow property that has come to be known as the Phleger Estate. In 1984, Herman died. He and Mary Elena had been life-long boosters of conservation and environmental causes. In that spirit, Mary Elena offered the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) the opportunity to preserve the property. Within four years, POST managed to raise the necessary funding to make the purchase possible. On April 29, 1995, the Phleger Estate was dedicated as a part of the GGNRA.

The 1,084 acre parcel¹ is located west of Cañada Road and north of San Mateo County's Huddart Park in the southern hill country of the Peninsula, once a portion of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* in the heart of a robust logging industry during the nineteenth century. Its western boundary is a forested ridge plainly visible from United States Interstate 280 to the east. This ridge and slope is the eastern portion of Kings Mountain of the Sierra Morena or Santa Cruz Range of Mountains (also referred to as the Skyline) and at 2,315 feet is the second highest point in San Mateo County.² Three major drainages run from the Mountain into West Union Creek.

The Phleger Estate includes redwoods, mixed evergreens and tan oak woodlands. The redwoods are mostly in stream corridors of canyons of the Skyline and also along West Union Creek. These trees include mostly second-growth redwoods, however, the lumberjacks did not take every one of the original sequoias, because a few old growth trees, obviously the more inaccessible ones, live in the upper portions of the property. The tan oaks grow on the moist slopes often between grasslands and chaparral. The canopy from these trees is dense.³

EARLY OCCUPATION

INDIAN PEOPLE

When the Spanish arrived on the San Francisco Peninsula in 1769, the land from present day Belmont, south to Redwood City, and from the Bay into the hills was occupied by the Lamchin local tribe of the Ohlone group of California Indians. Their region of occupation included today's Woodside, Huddart Park and the Phleger Estate. At this time of contact, mission records tell us that the Lamchin consisted of about 350 people. The padres spoke of the Lamchin as possessing four villages, Cchanigtac, Guloisnistac, Oromstac and Supichon. It has never been precisely determined where these villages existed.⁴

The Spanish moved most of the Lamchin to *Mission San Francisco de Asís*, where they

were made Christians, between 1784 and 1793. A few were baptized at *Mission Santa Clara* during this same period.⁵

Before being brought to the missions, it's likely that the Lamchin living in the Phleger Estate area existed the way most Ohlone people did (see Introduction and Sweeney Ridge portions of this study for more about the Ohlones). Certainly this particular place rendered rich food sources. There were small mammals, waterfowl, deer, elk and fish readily available, along with acorn and other key substances. However, the people suffered by having the fierce grizzly bear present.

Archeological investigation of the Phleger Estate has been ongoing since 1974. One site has been found, a substantial village, which included a large midden (refuse heap) with 15 bedrock mortars (for acorn grinding). This 30,000 meter area is located on property still held privately. The village may have extended into GGNRA lands.⁶

THE SPANISH

The first Europeans to encounter the great redwood forests of the Peninsula were the members of the Gaspar de Portolá party of 1769. After having discovered the San Francisco Bay from Sweeney Ridge, this military expedition turned south in an attempt to find a way around the estuary. It is possible that they camped on or near the Phleger Estate, as they made note of the great trees.

The next Spanish soldier to explore the valley was Captain Francisco Rivera y Moncada in 1774. He was charged with scouting for locations to place a *presidio* and a mission. The party most likely passed east of the Phleger Estate. Rivera recorded visiting five large villages that he had not seen when he was with Portolá, five years earlier.⁷

When Lieutenant Colonel Juan Bautista de Anza came through in 1776, also scouting for the mission and *presidio* sites, he wrote about the redwoods and their potential for helping the community at San Francisco with future needs.

Despite Anza's observations, the Spanish generally did not see the immense redwood trees as great resources to help with building their mission communities. Instead they largely made use of adobe for construction. The trees were so huge that harvesting them seemed too labor intensive.

RANCHO CAÑADA DE RAYMUNDO

After secularization of the mission lands, the property now called the Phleger Estate was (in 1841) granted to John Copinger, as part of his 12,545-acre *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo*.⁸ This massive portion of the central Peninsula included, in today's terms, the watershed area from Upper Crystal Springs Reservoir, south including nearly all of Woodside up to Portola Road and, roughly east from Cañada Road to the Skyline.

Within today's San Mateo County, Copinger was one of two non-Spanish or Mexican-born men to receive land grants during the Mexican era of California History (the other being American businessman Jacob Leese). Copinger was, in fact, born the son of Alderman John Copinger⁹ in Dublin, Ireland in 1810. There exists various tales about the man. Among them is one that he became a British Naval Lieutenant in the mid-1830s and in a dispute with his commanding officer threw a glass at him. He then deserted the Navy while his ship was anchored in the San Francisco Bay, near the little port of Yerba Buena.¹⁰

In 1836, Copinger became embroiled in California politics when he supported Sub-inspector of Customs at Monterey, Juan Bautista Alvarado, in leading a revolt against the Mexican appointed Governor, using the slogan: "California for Californians."¹¹ Down in Monterey, he served under Alvarado as a lieutenant and helped him defeat a small Mexican troop. Alvarado then became the new governor. Copinger travelled to the San Francisquito Creek area and joined Bill "The Sawyer" Smith and other non-Mexican drifters and whipsawyers to work among the redwood trees.¹² Such individuals were like Copinger, trying to find safe haven from authorities that might be looking for them.

Another story tells how Copinger found work with Doña Soto, the widow of Rafael Soto. Her father-in-law, Ignacio Soto, had been among the original California colonists with Juan Bautista de Anza in 1776. Rafael acquired *Rancho Rincoñada del Arroyo de San Francisquito* in the Palo Alto area of today. It could be said that if Copinger worked for Soto, then he married his boss' daughter -- Maria Luisa Soto (in 1839). As Maria's husband, Copinger became one of a number of English-speaking foreigners who would marry into Mexican families, allowing them increased access to the ruling elite in California.

This marriage, Copinger's record as a "war veteran" and his becoming a Mexican citizen all helped him to gain political favor. He also either converted to the Catholic religion, or was a Catholic already. Being a Catholic assisted him, also in 1839, to be appointed Justice of the Peace for "the Redwoods" by his friend Alvarado. His jurisdiction extended to the coast and made up about half of today's San Mateo County. The Governor then awarded him *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* the next year.

In 1841, Copinger began building an adobe home at his *rancho* which he finished in 1842. It stood northwest of the present intersection of Kings Mountain and Woodside Roads, which became known as Adobe Corner. The Great Earthquake of 1906 destroyed this house. Nearby, in the Bear Gulch area, he constructed a grist mill and dam. Copinger became involved in lumbering operations on his *rancho*. Extraordinarily, according to Mexican government records of 1841, 100,000 board feet of wood were ready at the embarcadero near Santa Clara for export to the Hawaiian Islands.

It is presumed that most or all of this was logged on Copinger's *rancho*, all in the day before lumber mills.¹³

With the outbreak of the Mexican-American War in 1846, Copinger began selling off his land. The exact nature of the boundaries of *Cañada Raymundo* would haunt the new owners for years. As early as 1841, Francisco Guerrero, of Rancho Corral de Tierra fame, was brought in to settle a dispute between Copinger and his neighbors, the Arguello family of *Rancho de las Pulgas*. Guerrero found in favor of the Arguellos. Nevertheless, heirs of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* sold portions of the disputed land creating endless court cases, that were not truly resolved until the United States Congress stepped in and enacted bill HR11404 on January 19, 1914, "for relief of claimants of the Coppinger (sic.) Grant."

Copinger died in 1847. Maria then married another Irish seaman, Captain John Greer.¹⁴ Greer became somewhat of a local legend too. He laid out today's Cañada Road (1862) and sold timber rights to a variety of parties. As the Gold Rush started in 1849, one of these, entrepreneur Charles Brown, initiated a more productive logging industry by introducing a water-powered sawmill to the redwood country.¹⁵

As with all the *rancho* owners, Maria Luisa Soto Copinger Greer had to prove she owned her land grant after the Land Act of 1851 passed. Lengthy and costly legal proceedings finally ended in a patent issued in 1859 to her and her daughter,¹⁶ Manuela Copinger Greer. In 1867, Manuela married Antonio Miramontes who lived in the Portola Valley. He was the grandson of Candelario Miramontes, owner of the extensive Coastside *rancho* at Half Moon Bay.

FOREIGNERS IN THE REDWOODS

While Copinger may have been the most prominent, there was an amorphous group of foreigners in the redwoods during the Mexican period that lived on or in the vicinity of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo*. Beginning with Mexican independence in 1821, California was opened up for trade, and ships from around the world visited here, bartering a variety of goods principally for hides and tallow. Life at sea could be difficult and cruel, so there is no wonder why some sailors deserted ship when anchored at Yerba Buena. It was hard to hide on the windswept northern end of the Peninsula, and so these former seamen hid out in the wooded mountains to the south.¹⁷ As deserters, their character on the whole was questionable, looked upon by most as drifters and, worse, criminals. The *Californios* were known to catch and return sailors to their ships, for rewards, but in the redwoods, except for a couple of round-ups, these fugitives seemed to have found protected refuge. Once his ship left port the chances of a man being captured were reduced to practically nothing. Among the deserters, themselves, they felt "no stain upon a man's character" for leaving a ship, since most were "maltreated"¹⁸ aboard their vessels. They seem to have been largely

English-speaking, hailing mostly from the United States but also from England, Ireland and Scotland. Probably, they never numbered more than about 50 individuals on the stretch of land radiating outward from today's Kings Mountain and Woodside Roads. They called the place "*Pulgas* redwoods."¹⁹

These men turned out thousands of feet of lumber using the simplest tools and techniques. Other foreigners made do by operating stills. Such alcohol making operations were ubiquitous throughout the lumbering countryside.

In matters of socialization, there were no English-speaking women in the redwoods. So, the sawyers naturally attempted contact with Spanish-speaking women. The attitude about such relationships among the *Californios* was generally favorable. The English-speakers were encouraged to become citizens of Mexico, and, provided they were or could become Catholic, some, like John Copinger, were even granted land.²⁰ The *Californios* had fascination for the ways of the foreigners and welcomed their business sense and opportunities they brought with them. Marriages cemented relationships and made for important political and business alliances.

According to Richard Henry Dana in his *Two Years Before the Mast* (1840), the first of the "*Ingles*" (as the Californians called English-speakers) to make inroads into *Californio* society were the shopkeepers and traders who arrived with the first ships in the 1820s. They were numerous at Monterey where they stood in the middle between the goods of the merchant ships and the hides and tallow of the rancheros. The *Californios* were mostly suspicious of the ships' captains, but the *Ingles*, who lived amongst them, had become Mexican citizens, converted to Catholicism and married into their families; thus they could be trusted.

Several of the most important men of the Peninsula made great progress by entering into marriage with local women. They include names already discussed in this study, such as John Copinger, James Denniston (who came to own *Rancho Corral de Tierra*) and James Johnston (the dairyman at Half Moon Bay).

The marriages, while acceptable to the *Californios*, were sometimes looked down upon by east coast Americans. In general, people from the United States held certain prejudices, about the citizens of Mexico. They felt them lazy, wasteful and immoral. They also derided their Catholic religion, holding their Protestant work ethic and other values superior to a religion corrupted by power-hungry priests in Rome. Also, very real to them was the concept that people of Anglo-Saxon background were racially superior to Latin Americans. For most of the early *Ingles* of the *Pulgas* redwoods, these types of prejudices were left on the ships they deserted.

By all accounts the first of the foreigners to see the giant redwoods and to enter into

the logging business was Bill “The Sawyer” Smith. He came on the Woodside scene in 1832 with his whipsaw and built a small shake cabin near Woodside and Kings Mountain Roads, close to where Copinger constructed his adobe ten years later.²¹ In 1834, Smith (also known by the *Californios* as Guillermo Esmit) married Josepa Saenz at Mission Dolores.²² The couple lived down the Peninsula, where Smith continued his logging activities.

Among the stories concerning this legendary character of the redwoods is one about him, and another sawyer named George Ferguson. One night in 1835, a grizzly bear rampaged through their camp. The next day they constructed a trap by digging a pit. That night a bear was caught, and they tried to crush it to death with a log. After this failed and the bear escaped, Smith went to Yerba Buena and purchased an old musket. The two men killed a steer when Smith returned and used it for bait. They shot three bears in the hours between sunset and dawn.²³

Perhaps the most well-known of the early *Ingles* of the *Pulgas* redwoods was Charles Brown. He was born in New York in 1814. He served aboard the whaler *Helvetius*, until the vessel visited Yerba Buena, in 1833, and he deserted.²⁴ He arrived in the Woodside area within the year. About 1837, he married one of the daughters of Antonio Garcia of San Jose.²⁵ Around 1839, he purchased a portion of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* from John Copinger. He raised cattle there and built an adobe home that still stands on private property, near the junction of Woodside and Portola Roads.

In June of 1838, a severe earthquake along the San Andreas Fault split the earth between San Francisco and Santa Clara. Brown later described how giant redwood trees rocked, some splintering into pieces, and others were thrown down hillsides. He also noted that adobe structures were cracked and ruined.

After the Gold Rush started, Brown was among the first to realize the potential of the redwoods in building the great city that was growing exponentially at the northern tip of the Peninsula. He is credited with building the first lumber mill in the *Pulgas* redwoods in 1849.

Brown’s first wife died in 1850. He then married Rosalia de Haro, a sister of the well-known de Haro twins, Francisco and Ramon, killed during the Bear Flag Revolt. Her father, Francisco, owned *Rancho Laguna de la Merced* in today’s Daly City area. He had also been an *alcalde* of Yerba Buena. Showing how common the marriages of the *ranchero*’s daughters to the *Ingles* had become, this also represented Rosalia’s second marriage. She had married August Andrews back in 1844.²⁶

The list of deserters finding refuge in the *Pulgas* redwoods and marrying *Californio* women goes on. Another example is Scotsman James Pease (also seen as Peace). He

jumped ship in 1835 and married Pedro Valencia's daughter, Guadalupe. They eventually had two sons, James and Antonio.²⁷

Probably the most influential of the *Ingles* in the Bay Region was William Richardson. This Englishman, born in 1795, was first mate on a whaler visiting San Francisco Bay. He decided to stay, became a Catholic and married Maria Antonia Martínez, daughter of the *presidio's* *comandante*, Ignacio Martínez. Mexican authorities made him Captain of the Port in 1835, and he is said to have built the first house at Yerba Buena, a canvas and wooden structure. He constructed a proper adobe house the next year. He is thus credited for founding San Francisco as a commercial center. As the hide-and-tallow trade increased in importance into the 1840s, the community at Yerba Buena Cove, about where the Transamerica Building is located today, gained activity. Richardson ran two schooners manned by Indian crews back and forth from Santa Clara. He specialized in selling grain, hides and tallow. He valued the grain at 20¢ per *fanega*, hides 12¢ each and \$1.00 for a bag of tallow. Richardson was also notable for receiving *Rancho Saucelito* across the Golden Gate.²⁸

Back in the redwoods, the population in the late 1830s and 1840s grew too. Increasingly, men from around the world ended up there. This included Englishmen Jim "The Corporal" and "Sergeant" Lewis, marines who deserted H.M.S. Sulpher in 1836.²⁹ They were joined by fellow countrymen Robert Livermore and William Swinbourn. Americans we know about included Henry Jubilee Bee, Billy Bonito, Hopping Jack and Black George. Juan Moreno (John Brown) was probably a Swede. French Joe was possibly French or Canadian.

As a group, American William Heath Davis remembered them as an increasingly "loose and roving lot," and poor credit risks.³⁰ Under Governor Alvarado, the *Pulgas* redwoods were raided in 1840, and authorities took those who could not produce proper papers to Monterey. In May of 1841 a second sweep of the *Pulgas* redwoods was made. Ten were caught including two Englishmen, two Germans, one Scot, one Canadian, one Swede, one Portuguese, one Irishman and one Frenchman. Interestingly, no Americans were picked up.

With the Mexican-American War (1846-1848), the discovery of Gold (1848) and the Gold Rush (1849), new types of pioneers began showing up in the redwood country. Irishman Dennis Martin came to California with the first wagon train over the Sierra Nevada in the winter of 1844-45. He had started out in Missouri with his father and brother as part of the Elisha Stevens party. They crossed over the mountains two years before the Donner Party attempted it. He was at Sutter's Fort for some time and then came to the Bay Area, where in 1849 he married Bridget O'Neill at the Mission in San Francisco.

The couple moved to the southern part of the Peninsula and, in 1850, bought a portion of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* at San Francisquito Creek from John Greer, who had just married Maria Luisa Soto Copinger. Martin became one of the more established members of the community. He built a sawmill and a grist mill. He also created St. Dennis Chapel, for some years the only place of worship on the Bayside between San Francisco and Santa Clara. Sadly, Martin became caught up in the legal land battle between the heirs of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* and the Arguello family, of *Rancho de las Pulgas* and eventually lost everything. He died destitute in San Francisco in 1890.³¹

Irish Presbyterian Captain John Greer is also different from the earlier foreigners. He entered San Francisco Bay with his ship *Wild Duck* in 1849 and noticed a forest of masts parked at Yerba Buena Cove. Some 700 ships were there, deserted by their crews who left for the Gold Country. After the *Wild Duck* dropped anchor, his entire crew, with the exception of a salt so infirm he could hardly walk named McEchin, followed the other sailors into the Gold Country. In the next year his fortunes were radically changed when he married John Copinger's widow, Maria Luisa, and settled down at their *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo*, in the heart of the thriving lumber country. They had five children together. Maria Luisa died in 1883 and John followed her in death in 1885.

THE LOGGING INDUSTRY AND THE BUILDING OF SAN FRANCISCO (CONTEXTUAL)

On January 24, 1848, James Marshall spotted something shiny in the American River while working on a mill for John Sutter. It was gold.

In part to justify the war with Mexico, that December, President James K. Polk displayed some eight pounds of California gold during his State of the Union address. The demonstration sparked the rush to the Pacific coast in the new year. San Francisco became a boomtown. It was the only oceangoing port on the California coast with access to the great river valley, which was itself only miles from the gold in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada.

Everybody (if not coming by covered wagon) and everything destined for the Gold Country stopped in the City first. Smaller ships and boats then completed the trip to jumping off places like Sacramento and Stockton.

The growth at San Francisco can be mostly described as frantic. Within two years of Polk's speech the population of San Francisco had jumped from a few hundred to 30,000.³² Even with the incredible influx of people, San Francisco existed as a place occupied by a largely transient population. Hence it has been referred to as a "place

without homes.”³³ The mostly male population did build auction houses, hotels, bathhouses, billiard rooms, boardinghouses, eating and drinking establishments, offices (buildings reaching up four stories), banks, groggeries, gambling saloons and brothels. By the end of 1850 this instant city, built around its wharves at Yerba Buena Cove, suffered four devastating fires, necessitating it being nearly completely rebuilt each time. Construction materials became of vital importance for San Francisco, and entrepreneurs focused on the *Pulgas* redwoods down the Peninsula.

Of all the woods available to San Franciscans, redwood was the best. It does not warp. It resists insect infestation. It contains no resins. It is beautiful as a finished product. Most importantly, it is very durable. As late as the 1890s, observers of early construction in California marveled how the 1820s, Russian-built Fort Ross, made of redwood, was still a solid structure. The earliest fences in San Mateo County made of this material were “still sound”³⁴ as well.

Redwoods were plentiful throughout the world millions of years ago. However glaciers and other massive changes in the earth’s history left just a few places on earth where they still existed by 1849.³⁵ Between the Oregon border and Monterey lay a 500-mile strip within the fog belt of coastal mountains that still could support these gigantic trees, many of which were, themselves, thousands of years old.

Within this strip, the eastern and western slopes of the mountain ridge running through the middle of the San Francisco Peninsula provided a perfect environment for the *Sequoia sempervirens*³⁶ to thrive. Five to 20 feet in diameter, they existed in great numbers in 1849, and were amongst the first of the natural resources to be exploited in California at the beginning of the American period of the state’s history. The few “old growth” redwoods that still exist on the Phleger Estate are counted among the last of their kind.

The first Spanish in the area, with Gaspar de Portolá in 1769, made note of the trees. Padre Juan Crespi wrote: “The coastal plains and low hills were well forested with very high trees of a red cedar not known to us. . . in this region there is a great abundance of these trees, and because none of the expedition recognizes them they are named redwood from their color.”³⁷

While the fathers at *Mission Santa Clara* were, as early as 1777, teaching neophytes lumbering techniques,³⁸ it was probably not until 1787 that the missionaries at San Francisco, in the midst of updating their building, began using lumber from down the Peninsula. That year the padres reported “a good-sized cutting of timber was made for the construction of the Church.”³⁹

As mentioned previously, lack of adequate tools and technology limited these activi-