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ORANGE COUNTY
HISTORY
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Register - July 4, 1976

New World Empire Expanded By Spain

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In 1769, while the American colonies were moving toward war with the British, the crowned head of another European power, King Carlos III of Spain, uneasily eyed the growing British military migration as far west as the Mississippi Valley. He was well aware that it could spread to the Rockies, even the Pacific Coast.

With the Spaniards firmly entrenched in Mexico, King Carlos looked upon the Pacific Coast — particularly what is today the state of California — as a natural extension of the Spanish domain in North America.

The growing westward migration of the British, he felt, was a threat to Spanish designs.

Then came word that Russian fur traders were establishing small, scattered settlements on the northern Pacific Coast. It wasn't the best excuse, but it was a ready one and in March 1769, Spanish officials in Mexico City were ordered to move northward immediately. They were to explore "Alta" California, and claim it for Spain in the face of the Russian "menace." Of prime importance, Carlos reasoned, any British claims to the Pacific Coast would be eliminated once and for all by the enterprise.

The man chosen to lead this expedition was a dogged army captain named Don Gaspar de Portola. His overland destination was to be Monterey, a place described by an earlier Spanish explorer, Vizcaino who sailed along the California coastline in 1602. Vizcaino called Monterey a natural harbor.

Portola was to be the first white man to enter what is today Orange County.

The expedition, or rather four separate ones totaling about 300 men, left Loreto, Baja, Calif., on March 9. They arrived in San Diego six weeks later where Father Junipero Serra established the first of the 21 Franciscan missions that were to dot California.

The trip was a disaster. One of the two groups that had sailed for San Diego by sea was lost and never heard from again. Only 126 men straggled into San Diego by land and sea and of that number, wrote Portola, only half were fit for continued service.

Nor was Portola very optimistic about the condition the 63 soldiers, muleteers and two priests who would march to Monterey.

They were, he later wrote, "skeletons

All Local Stories By DAVE ROSE

Register Staff Writer

who had been spared from scurvy, hunger and thirst."

On July 16, the expedition left San Diego with 10 soldiers in the vanguard led by a scout, sergeant Don Gaspar Ortega, who rode miles ahead to blaze a trail for the main party, dashing boldly into Indian villages, marking campsites each day.

Among those soldiers was a strapping young man barely turned 20, whose stamina to withstand the dangers of the wilds and the ravages of disease had earned him the rank of corporal. He was Jose Antonio Yorba and on this expedition he was to stand in the valley of the Santa Ana River, much of which he would later own and pass on to descendants who still live here today.

Father Juan Crespi, the official diarist for the expedition, left no doubt as to its purpose. It was being undertaken, he wrote, to promote "the greater glory of God through the conversion of souls and for the service of the king whose dominions were being enlarged by this expedition."

On July 22, the expedition camped near what is now San Clemente. There the two priests were told of two badly injured Indian children who were dying.

They baptized the youngsters and the following day the party continued northward.

Each soldier carried a long lance, the butt of which rested against his hip. A broadsword hung at his side and a short musket was strapped to each saddle.

The soldiers wore steel helmets and a sleeveless coat made of six or seven thicknesses of tanned, tough leather to guard against the arrows of enemy Indians.

But there was no need to fear these Indians. Curious and friendly almost to a fault, they welcomed this strange caravan.

There were probably about 15,000 Indians in what is today Orange County, living in villages of 500 to 1,000 population. They had no horses, no cattle, no grain. They lived on acorns and an occasional rabbit and were thought by the expedition as well as the many Spaniards who later came to this area to be a generally lazy and worthless lot.

Father Crespi was more than a little impressed when he came upon what he was to name the valley of San Juan Capistrano (for Italian Saint John of Capistrano).

(Continued On Page 12)

Spain's American Empire Expanded

(Continued From Page 1)

He wrote in his meticulously kept diary: "The valley is all green with good grass and has many wild grapes and one sees some spots that resemble vineyards. I gave this valley the name of San Juan Capistrano for a mission so that this glorious saint who in life converted so many souls, may pray God in heaven for the conversion of these poor souls."

(Despite their zeal to convert the Indians to the ways of the church, the friars had converted scarcely 500 by 1773 in all of California).

The Portola expedition was a true trail blazer. Along the paths he chose, often hacked out of thick brush by sword-swinging soldiers, were to follow, Father Junipero Serra, the president father of all California missions and the Juan Bautista De Anza party which founded what is today San Francisco. Later came the future Spanish and Mexican governors, the Americans — General Fremont, Kit Carson, Commodore Stockton, General Kearney — and a host of other famous men who emblazoned their names in California history.

With the aid of his famed engineer, Miguel Costanso, Portola, the soldiers, the Indian helpers, the muleteers, and the padres blazed the El Camino Real, designated as the main road in Spanish and Mexican periods.

In Orange County, it wound its way through grassy canyons, across rivers and creeks from San Juan Capistrano to the little valley of La Habra, so named because it nestled in the hills and resembled a cove upon a picturesque shoreline.

From the valley of San Juan Capistrano, the Portola party marched across San Juan creek at what is now Mission Viejo and camped at the mouth of Trabuco Canyon, named by the soldiers because one of them there lost a blunderbuss (in Spanish, a trabuco).

They rested in that "pleasant arroyo" for a day, leaving the following morning, July 26, but not before observing St. Anne's Day with a "Holy sacrifice of the Mass" to the mother of Mary.

After traveling for two hours the party came to the edge of a large plain. Before them on this St. Anne's Day, "as far as the eye could reach," spread what was to be known as the Santa Ana Valley, named in honor of the day and the saint.

They pitched camp at what is probably now El Toro and the following day again traveled north across the plain, slaying close to the foothills, passing Red Hill in what is now Tustin.

Ortega guided his horse up Red Hill to the peak and what unfolded before his eyes as he reached the top presented a magnificent sight.

The San Joaquin slough at that time ran far back from what is now Upper Newport Bay.

Ortega's eyes must have blinked in wonder as they scanned a vast field of brilliant yellow dry mustard covering what is today Tustin and Santa Ana.

Like sentinels guarding the brown plain, great clumps of sycamores towered. Far off in the distance lay a wide green swamp and beyond that, the brilliant blue ocean shimmering under a bright yellow sun with Catalina Island standing off on the horizon.

On July 27, the Spaniards halted by an arroyo near what is today El Modena. Some estimate it may have been at the site of El Modena High School. Father Crespi described the area along this arroyo: "It has willows, grapevines, brambles and other bushes.

"It comes down from the mountains, and shows that it must have plenty of water in the rainy season."

Indeed it does. In 1967, after weeks of torrential rains, this swollen creek tore away at homes along its banks in Orange and Santa Ana, causing millions of dollars in damage.

Father Crespi named it Santiago, after the patron saint of Spain. The name stands today.

Father Crespi also proved himself to be something of a prophet. "If this watering place should remain throughout the year (it was nearly dry when he first came upon it), it would be a site for building a city on account of the large amount of land and the extensive plain that the arroyo has on both sides."

The following day, July 28,

Portola and his expedition traveled four miles further, camping along what the soldiers named the Santa Ana River. Historians place the camp at about the junction of the Newport and Riverside freeways.

Again Father Crespi was prophetic. He wrote of the river: "It is not at all boxed in by banks. It is evident from the sands on its banks that in the rainy season it must have great floods which would prevent crossing it. It has a great deal of good land which can easily be irrigated."

"We pitched camp on the left bank of this river," the padre wrote in his diary. "On its right bank there is a populous village of Indians who received us with great friendliness. Fifty-two of them came to camp and their chief told us by signs which we understood very well that we must come to live with them; that they would make houses for us and provide us with food, such as antelopes, hares and seed.

"They urged us to do this, telling us that all the land we saw, and there certainly was a great deal of it, was theirs, and that they would divide with us.

"We told him that we would return and would gladly live with them, and when the chief understood it he was so affected that he broke into tears.

"The governor (Portola) made them a present of some beads and a silk handkerchief, and in gratitude the chief gave us two baskets of seeds, already made into pinole (flour), together with a string of beads made of shells such as they wore."

The easy camaraderie on that warm sunny day along the river bank became in an instant, a time of terror. With a low rumble, then a roar, the earth suddenly erupted in a violent shaking and rocking in what Father Crespi described as "a horrifying earthquake."

It stuck at 1 p.m., the padre noted, and "lasted about half as long as an Ave Maria."

The first aftershock struck 10 minutes later "though not as violently" and was followed by two more within the next three hours, he wrote.

Father Crespi named the river "Jesus de los Temblores" to mark in history that violent afternoon, but the name never stuck.

Portola had had enough of the Santa Ana River country and the next day pushed across the river "with great difficulty on account of the swiftness of the current." He followed the foothills, soon reaching a little green valley with a large village of Indians who also were very friendly.

The valley was named Santa Marta, but is known as La Habra today.

The expedition then proceeded to what is now Whittier.

THE MISSIONS

They Changed Way Of Life For Indians

The Spanish didn't return to what now is Orange County until late 1775. In the British colonies the battles of Lexington, Concord and Bunker Hill had already been fought and the course toward American independence firmly, though precariously set.

In October of that year, Sgt. Juan Gaspar Ortega, who had led the Portola party six years earlier, returned to the shadows of Saddleback with a Franciscan priest, Father Fermin Lasuen, a close associate of Father Junipero Serra.

They had come to the San Juan Valley to found a third California mission to be located halfway between those at San Diego and San Gabriel in what is now east Los Angeles County.

Riding down San Juan Canyon, they came to the Trabuco, where it merges with San Juan Creek and flowed to the ocean two miles away.

Father Lasuen could see that the two streams had a large area of flat fertile land with rows of sycamore and willow trees lining the banks.

There, the Indians had established a village and Father Lasuen immediately determined it would be an ideal site for Mission San Juan Capistrano.

The padre wasn't too specific in his writings as to exactly where this mission site was by today's landmarks; but it wasn't far from the present mission.

On Oct. 30, 1775, the last feast day of the eight-day celebration of St. John of Capistrano, the Italian saint whom Father Serra held in high esteem, Father Lasuen laid out the building sites

and work was begun with the help of the friendly Indians.

But on Nov. 6, word arrived of an Indian attack on San Diego and Sgt. Ortega left immediately with his soldiers.

A disappointed Father Lasuen wrote: "We had just completed seven or eight days work in that place. We had erected the mission cross, enclosed a spacious corral, mapped out the buildings, dug the holes in which to insert the poles, transported the lumber and gathered a large quantity of tubes."

At the urging of Ortega, Father Lasuen also left after buying the church bells.

The Indian uprising put down in San Diego, the authorities finally gave permission for the padres to return on Sept. 19, 1776, Lasuen had since been transferred.

Father Serra finally arrived back at the mission site with 10 soldiers, the bells were dug up and hung. The cross was still standing and on Nov. 1, the mission was officially founded.

The Indians flocked to the ringing of the bells "rejoicing to see that the fathers had returned to their land," wrote Father Serra's biographer.

For years it was assumed that the mission was built on its present site. However, in 1865, annual reports of the mission, missing for more than 100 years, were found for the years between 1779 and 1795.

In one of those reports it was stated that the original mission site was moved about 2 1/2 miles to the site it occupies today "where we have the advantage of

(Continued On Page 2)

Spanish Missions Changed Indians' Lifestyle

(Continued From Page 1)

secure water." The original site, the report went on, was about halfway between the present site and the ocean. The move was made on Oct. 4, 1778.

The reports make no mention of a shortage of water, for there certainly wasn't. What was mentioned was "water failure." Historians surmise that constant flooding from the mountains and ocean storms contaminated the water, forcing the move further inland.

In a letter to Father Serra, Father Pablo Mugartegui, who replaced Father Lasuen at the mission, wrote that the first buildings at the new site were a church, living quarters and a shed for calves.

Vineyards and a vegetable garden were planted.

With the territorial rights to the "Alta" California, as the Spaniards referred to what is now the state of California, firmly secured for the time being, the padres turned their attention to their primary mission, saving the souls of the Indians.

There were about 2,000 of them living in villages in what is now the San Juan Valley. Believed to be of Shoshone stock, the Spaniards called them Juanenos and Gabriellinos, for the missions at San Juan Capistrano and San Gabriel.

What were these Indians like? Some thought they were a pretty scrubby, worthless lot, while others ascribed to them a certain nobility.

Historian John Caughey, after sifting through the records of the Spaniards of that era had this to say:

"The poor California Indian has almost never had a good word said for him. The most complimentary was 'peaceful' and 'numerous.'

"In all candor it must be admitted that the California Indians were backward. They knew nothing of gunpowder, iron, steel, the wheel, the plow, domesticated animals other than the dog, wheat barley and the other small grains.

"They had no system of writing. They had no inkling of the Christian religion. They also lacked the military cunning and ferocity that inspired respect for the Indians of the plains and the eastern woodlands.

"They were not such expert craftsmen in woodworking as those of the Northwest," Caughey concluded.

There are those, of course, who would say, and with no little justification, that those so-called shortcomings in reality were virtues, and what the white man didn't need was more ferocious, conniving Indians.

Some explain this generally docile nature (they did conduct a few uprisings and Father Serra narrowly escaped death on a trip from the mission at San Juan Capistrano to San Gabriel) as an extension of the climate in which they lived.

Whatever, there were estimated to be about 15,000 of them in what is today Orange County. They lived in small villages and the men generally went naked while the women wore a minimum of clothing.

They ate acorns, herbs, grass seed, shellfish and an occasional rabbit. Also much sought after were snakes, grasshoppers, snails and slugs. Even the angleworm was not overlooked as food.

The local Indian was an expert basket weaver, bought his bride and avoided all conversation with his mother-in-law as prescribed by tribal custom.

He was very athletic, playing a variety of such games as shinny, la crosse and American football. All this was accompanied by heavy gambling, which was thoroughly approved.

According to historian Caughey, the Indian's theology "involved a profusion of legendary animal tales, many of these stories representing a high achievement in speculation on fundamental philosophical problems.

"Explanations of the creation, of the origin of death and of the problems of good and evil bear some resemblance to the Biblical accounts," although they had had no previous contact with Christianity, Caughey noted.

So, in the next breath, Caughey says they weren't such a bad lot after all, although there was obviously a noticeable lack of women's liberties in the culture, one that generally expected the male Indian to take life easy and enjoy himself.

Entering adulthood, however, was no easy matter for the young Indian. He and she paid their dues — harshly.

The ceremony involved giving the kids jimson weed, a narcotic and stimulant, to get them going on their trip, then hallucinating to see an animal which would be their protector for life — a coyote, bear, rattlesnake or raven being the most popular.

Then the boys were burned by fire, whipped and laid on ant hills, denied all food of meat or seeds.

It wasn't much easier for the girls. After they were drugged, they were placed on bramble branches in an earthen pit lined with heated stones. They, too, fasted while the tribal women, their faces painted, whooped it up, dancing and chanting around the earthen pit. Tattooing often was a part of this coming out party.

Pam Hallan in her recent book "Two Hundred Years in San Juan Capistrano," relates the part of the Juáenos mythology which tells how they came to the valley of San Juan.

"In a village north of San Juan dwelled a chief called Oyaision and his wife Sirorum. After the death of his wife, the chief and his daughter Korone and their people went south to Niwiti, not far from San Juan.

Newcomers spread out and settlements were established. One night Korone, who was exceedingly fat, swelled so much that she turned into a small hill which remains today. The place was called Rutuldem."

That place according to the author, is believed by some anthropologists to be at what is today the Livingston-Graham sand and gravel pits at the east end of Trabuco Creek Road.

It could have been the site of a large Indian settlement, she concludes, because of the large number of Indian artifacts that have been found there during the last half century.

With 2,000 Indians at the Capistrano mission, it was obvious who was going to do the work to erect that oasis of Christianity, plant and harvest the crops and care for the growing herds of cattle — the Indians.

The padres were secure in their belief it was all for the good of the Indian, this business of salvation, if the Indian was to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

There are conflicting theories on whether the Indian really got his money's worth. Some historians say the missions were nothing more than "slave pens" reminiscent of those the blacks in the southern American colonies were forced to endure.

Others say the Indian never had it so good, enjoying a "romantic, pastoral life."

As to the esteem in which the padres held the Indian, again, there are opposing points of view. One said the mission fathers treated the Indian "as hopelessly retarded children."

Another said they were treated "with complete compassion."

As with most generalizations, the answer probably lies somewhere in between those extremes.

What is known is that the Indians of this valley had been highly mobile nomads, wandering about Southern California where the supplies of acorns and rabbits took them, feasting occasionally on fish and other seafoods.

They enjoyed one of the finest climates the world has to offer and seldom were times bad. It was a pretty good life.

But as the early padres also noticed, the Juáenos were also rather pious Indians, worshipping a deity called Chingchinich. They were also deeply moved and fascinated by the music of the Catholic chapel.

It was, the padres agreed, a most promising situation for men who were in the business of saving souls.

Father Palou was delighted. "Unlike the Indians at other missions...who would molest the missionaries by begging for eatables and other presents, these of San Juan Capistrano molested the missionaries with petitions for baptism," he wrote.

A decade after the mission's founding, the padres could report 544 conversions to the faith among the Indians and the number was to reach 994 by 1796, with 1,649 baptisms.

In short, many an Indian found a home at the mission. The hours were good, food was plentiful and they had a roof over their heads.

After church services and prayer, the work day for the mission Indian began at 9 a.m. with a lunch break at 11:15. He returned to work at 1 p.m. and knocked off for the day two hours later.

On many a day, after dinner came music, dances, fun and games until the mission bell was rung at 8 p.m., the signal that the mission gates would close 45 minutes later.

Those may have been ideal working conditions for the European, but for the Indian it represented a schedule and some just couldn't take that sort of regimentation. Many fled.

If they were converts to the church, they were tracked down, taken back to the mission and punished, leading more than one historian to conclude that despite the compassion with which the padres looked upon the converts to the church, the Indian was still little more than a ward.

But the mission padres were convinced the Indian never had it so good. He was taught a trade, a new language (Spanish) and a new religion that guaranteed the salvation of the soul. What more could he want?

Among the approximately 1,400 Indians and Spaniards who lived in that thriving and growing community, most agreed with that conclusion. The mission's cattle herd grew into the thousands, hundreds of acres were planted in grain, graineries were built and cabins for the neophytes (converts) and their families.

But there were problems. Measles, a disease unknown to the Indians before the arrival of the Spaniards, took many lives over the years.

And in the beginning years, there were problems with the mission guards. As early as three weeks after the establishment of the mission, the missionaries "seemed to have a great deal of trouble restraining the sexual proclivities of the soldiers assigned to protect them," wrote a church historian.

"Recruited from the scum of society in Mexico, frequently convicts and jailbirds, it is not surprising that the mission guards should be guilty of such and similar crimes at nearly all the missions.

"In truth, the guards counted among the worst obstacles to missionary progress. The wonder is that the missionaries nevertheless succeeded so well in attracting converts."

The struggle of the American colonists 3,000 miles to the east was brought home to the Spaniards and Indians of California in 1781. Under the circumstances, it generated little enthusiasm.

In a royal decree that arrived at San Juan Capistrano on Aug. 12, the padres and Spanish authorities were notified that a tax of \$2 on all Spaniards and \$1 per Indian was to be levied to purchase arms for the colonists.

King Carlos III had shown little sympathy for American independence, but if he, with the aid of the French, could rid the American continent of the British, the balance of power in Europe would certainly be enhanced.

The padres were unhappy. Throughout the missions of California, most pleaded poverty in an effort to avoid the levy. Some were granted, others weren't.

Among the latter was the San Juan Capistrano mission. The plea was turned down, with the admonition that if funds weren't immediately available, the individuals could pay their tax through the sale of fruit and grains from the recent harvest.

At Capistrano, \$229 was raised. Throughout California, \$4,603 was collected.

It was all for naught. By the time the money reached the colonies, Cornwallis had surrendered at Yorktown and the revolution was over.

If nothing else, this tiny footnote to the American revolution gave Californian historians a little to boast about.

In California few of those forced to pay up even know there were colonies on the east coast. It wasn't exactly an outpouring of sympathy.

As the mission at Capistrano developed, great herds of cattle began to roam the thousands of acres of plains and hillsides that came under control of the mission.

There were vast fields of grain. At the mission itself, Indians labored in the mill, carpenter shops, tallow shops and leather shops, learning trades; the padres were convinced were all for the good of the Indian, giving him a feeling of worth and self respect.

There is no record of how the Indian himself looked upon this appraisal. Some made it plain they didn't agree. They fled, some of them hoping to organize a revolt.

But the vast majority of Indians at Capistrano had no intention of following suit. Those in the mission itself worked the short hours, sang the Christian songs and gladly

partook of the Mass and the dances.

For those who lived in the settlements outside the mission and who worked the fields and the cattle herds it probably was a more strenuous life.

In 1797 work began on the Great Stone Church to be built in the shape of a giant Latin cross 180 feet long and surmounted by a 120-foot bell-tower at its southern end.

It contained six domes on the roof and a master mason from Mexico, Isidro Aguilar, was hired to supervise the work. As in the past, the Indians did the work. It was to form the nucleus of the mission village.

Sandstone was found six miles to the northeast where it was quarried and limestone was found near El Toro. Sycamore wood came from the Trabuco area.

It took nine years, but in 1806 the mission church was completed. With its massive belltower, it became known as the "Jewel of the Missions" in California.

It was a great event in this sparsely settled land. Gov. Jose Arillaga was there for the dedication as were soldiers from Santa Barbara and San Diego. Neophytes crowded in from the surrounding settlements.

The fiesta which followed, historians say, "became a legend in Southern California."

Dec. 8, 1812, was a day of catastrophe for the six-year-old church and the mission.

For the second time in 36 years, the area was rocked by a devastating earthquake.

Mass was being celebrated inside the great edifice when those inside heard a distant roar. Then it struck, the church rocked and the great bell tower began to sway under the weight of the bells. It tottered but held and tottered a second time as the panic stricken congregation scrambled for the doors.

The bells rang a final time, then the tower came crashing down, carrying to their deaths the two Indian bell ringers.

Then the walls collapsed and 38 neophytes were buried under the rubble of stone and mortar.

The church was destroyed and never rebuilt. What stands today is all that was left of that magnificent edifice that took so much sweat, and determination to build.

It almost seemed as if that cataclysmic occurrence signaled the beginning of the end for the missions of California as the hub of social, cultural and economic activity.

A decade later, Mexico would find its independence from Spain and a decade after that, the missions would be "secularized," by the Mexican government, meaning that those vast mission land tracts would be carved up and given away, leading to the era of the fabulous ranchos and the dashing rancheros who owned and ran them.

The mission at San Juan Capistrano, like the others, would be little more than a church.

The idea was threefold. Divide up the land, release the Indians, and reduce the power of the church.

It was a grand gesture on the part of the Mexican government, that Proclamation of Emancipation of 1826, declaring that Indians, when "qualified," would be made Mexican citizens and free of the control the mission had held over them for so many years.

For some Indians, it was a dream come true. For others, it was a disaster.

Many Indians welcomed it. A chance to get out of what they believed was a form of slavery. True, the initial choice to live at the mission had been theirs; but once accepted by the mission fathers, there was little freedom.

They asked such questions as why they had to support the soldiers when soldiers were no longer necessary. They had been promised the land they worked on, but when was that to be?

And they were more than a little aware that punishment was sometimes meted out to them for offenses that went

unpunished when committed by non-Indians.

But others were uneasy. It was to be a traumatic time. They were happy with mission life, devout Catholics who loved their padres and happily turned out the work. Their release from mission life was to be painful, to say the least.

Wrote one historian: "The neophytes were torn tragically between a secure, authoritarian existence and a free but anarchic one.

"Those who had spent their lives in the shadow of the cross often rejected the proffered liberty, not out of fear of the padres' wrath, but of the uncertainties of the outer world."

For the next decade the mission at San Juan Capistrano fell into a deep and discouraging decline.

The Indians who remained after the emancipation simply couldn't handle all the work and the once well-tended fields became overrun with mustard.

Alfred Robinson visited Capistrano in 1829, noting that it was once the largest of all the missions... "yet it is now in a dilapidated state and the Indians are much neglected."

In 1833, Governor Jose Figueroa declared all Indians free, whether the mission padres thought they were qualified for such status or not. This act also set up a program to help make the Indians self-supporting, calling for the establishment of Indian pueblos and providing land from the mission holdings to support those pueblos.

The era of the vast land-holdings of the Capistrano mission came to an end officially in August 1834, when the Mexican government ordered their confiscation.

The decree stated that the Indians were to receive half the land with the remainder to be "administered for the public good and support of the church."

An inventory placed the value of the Capistrano mission lands and buildings at \$56,465. It also listed 861 neophytes, many of whom left the mission to move back into the settlements around the mission. Others moved back into the wild country beyond the Sierras.

There were only 500 Indians left in the area around the Capistrano mission by 1850, and only 100 in the pueblo itself. Commented one historian, "the neophytes remained a demoralized class, alternately a prey to disease, liquor, violence, submission and exploitation."

Gold, Drought Spelled End Of Colorful Rancho Period

While the mission at Capistrano was falling into a state of decay, the Mexican government was parceling out its lands in great chunks to those Mexicans who applied for it.

All but one of the great ranchos located wholly or partially in what is now Orange County were Mexican.

The most famous of them all, however, was the lone Spanish rancho, Santiago de Santa Ana, 62,516 acres on the site of what is today Santa Ana, Tustin, Orange, El Modena, Olive, Costa Mesa and a portion of Newport Beach.

Jose Antonio Yorba, one of the Catalan soldiers with the Portola party of 1769 hadn't forgotten that breathtaking moment when he first glimpsed the lush Santa Ana Valley.

Yorba had married the daughter of Juan Pablo Grijalva of San Francisco who had been "the right hand man" to Juan Bautista de Anza when in 1775-76 the latter took a large band of colonists from Sonora, Mexico, across the Colorado River, over the desert, through Orange County to San Gabriel. From there they moved on to found San Francisco.

The second of Grijalva's beautiful daughters married another young cavalier of the guard in San Francisco, Pedro Peralta.

Grijalva, one of the great explorers of his time, had founded the mission San Pedro Martyr in Southern California and also come to the Santa Ana valley where in 1861 he built an adobe ranch house and grazed his stock in Santiago Canyon and along the lower Santa Ana River.

He petitioned the king of Spain for that grant of land and it was signed by a Spanish governor under the king's name.

In 1809, three years after Grijalva's death in San Diego, Yorba and Peralta submitted a petition for the same tract of land, pointing out that Grijalva had submitted the earlier petition representing not only himself but Yorba.

The Yorba-Peralta grant was signed

in 1810 and the rancho was born. Also born were a total of 17 children to the Yorbas and the Peraltas, a situation which, in later years, combined with the vaguely described boundary lines of the rancho, were to create countless legal headaches when the time came up to divvy up the ranch among those heirs and later the Americans who were to follow and purchase it.

James Irvine, a San Francisco businessman, would be one of those buyers.

Young Yorba immediately proceeded to build a ranch house and stock his vast holdings initially with 300 head of cattle and a like number of horses. The rancho stood alone in Orange County.

But in 1822, the Spaniards were out of the North American continent and Mexico had her independence. With that independence came the granting of Southern California ranchos in wholesale numbers. They were all free.

Among the more famous Mexican ranchos was the San Joaquin, founded in 1837, covering 48,803 acres and bordering the ocean between Newport Beach and Laguna Beach. With a small strip of the rancho Santiago de Santa Ana and rancho Lomas de Santiago, it comprised what is today the Irvine Ranch.

Owner of the San Joaquin was Jose Sepulveda famed for his hospitality, fast horses and flamboyant dress.

Sepulveda was typical of the California ranchers of the 1830-50s. Robert Glass Clelland in his book "California," describes the rancho as "the dashing figure with his gold or silver embroidered deerskin shoes, velvet or satin breeches, gold-braided and silver buttoned; velvet or silk vest with a wide sash of red satin; dark cloth jacket embroidered in silver and gold and a wide flattopped sombrero with a cord of silver or gold."

There was dancing under the soft Southern California skies in the evenings and great outdoor feasts during the day.

The major sports were hunting the grizzly bear and wild horses with a lasso

and mustang and bull vs. bear fights. Rodeos were numerous and always festive occasions.

Even the vaquero led the good life compared to his American counterpart, the cowboy.

While the rancheros and vaqueros worked the herds, the women raised large families, cooked, did the housework and spent a great deal of time making lace and embroidery. Many of these women rode and hunted with their husbands. Picnics and dances celebrated every event—weddings, births, religious festivals and political changes.

(Continued On Page 6)

End Of Colorful Rancho Period

(Continued From Page 1)

The rancheros were incredibly hospitable and generous. A traveler stopping at a rancho house could be assured of plenty of food, lavish lodging and a fresh horse. Some rancheros even left money in guest rooms that the visitor was expected to help himself to.

Luxuries abounded for the rancheros and their families. Yankee, English and Hawaiian traders, Rocky Mountain trappers and Russian fur hunters flocked to the rancheros and Dana Point with their wares in exchange for hides and tallow.

One of the most distinguished rancheros of all was Don Bernardo Yorba, now patriarchal head of the Yorba family since the death of the rancho's co-founder in 1825. His home was Rancho Canyon de Santa Ana, north and just across the river from the Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana, and his home was known as Hacienda de Las Yorbas.

It was considered the social and economic center of the Santa Ana Valley by 1850.

He lived in a two-story, 30-room mansion. There were another 20 rooms used for a school, harness shops, shoemakers room, etc.

Yorba, one of the three or four wealthiest of all the rancheros, grazed cattle, horses and sheep, planted wheat and fruit on his 37,000 acres.

He had more than 100 employees, including four woolcombers, two tanners, a butter and cheese man, a harness-maker, two shoemakers, a jeweler, a plasterer, a carpenter, shepherd, baker, cook, washwomen and sewing women, a dressmaker, gardeners, "and a man to make wine." The Indian "peons"



(Photo Courtesy of Title Insurance and Trust Co.)

JOSE SEPULVEDA ON 'BLACK SWAN' Aristocratic Rancho Of Southland

lived in a little village of their own nearby.

It was a compact, self-sustaining little community with lavish parties and dances in the evenings and weekends.

It seemed there would be no end to this idyllic life, that it would go on forever.

It was an illusion, of course. Events were raucously conspiring to bring a disillusioning end to the great ranchos and their flamboyant, almost anarchical way of life.

In 1846, the U.S., fearing a claim to Mexico's shaky hold on California by the British, French and even Russian in-

terests, went to war against the Mexicans. Two years later, California was part of the United States.

But in 1849 came the great blow. Gold was discovered in the north turning quiet, sleepy little pueblos into roaring cities. Huge fortunes were in the making that would find their way into Southern California in the form of land purchases from their luckless and broker rancheros. Their days were numbered.

Perhaps the demise of the noble, aristocratic rancho Don Jose Andres Sepulveda, was the most symbolic of all.

A famed horseman, generous to a fault and an inveterate gambler, Sepulveda's extravagances caught up with him when the drought of the early 1860s struck the ranchos.

Cattle, horses and sheep died by the thousands as the drought choked the verdant valleys of Southern California. Great fires swept over the land, wrecking further havoc. Sepulveda, deep in debt, was forced to sell his holdings on Dec. 6, 1864.

By today's money standards, the price was ridiculously, even tragically low. His lands, now totaling 50,000 acres, went for \$18,000.

Waiting with cash in hand were three prosperous sheepmen and a flourishing merchant from San Francisco. They were Llewellyn Bixby, Benjamin and Thomas Flint and the merchant, James Irvine, a Scottish-Irish immigrant from New England who had followed the gold rush to California.

Sepulveda, once the grand aristocrat of Southern California and Orange County was wiped out. Other rancheros faced the same fate. Their livelihood had depended upon grazing land and the capriciousness of nature. The latter had dealt them a mortal blow and now, as they looked over the dust-filled fire blackened hills and plains, they had no choice but to sell out to the men who held the gold dust from the north.

There had been problems prior to the drought. In 1851 the U.S. Land Commission had been established in an attempt to sort out and verify the blurred and often impossible-to-find boundaries of the Mexican ranchos.

It was understandable that these boundary lines were vague. When the grants were handed out there was plenty of land and few people. No one was greedy about it. There was more than enough for everyone.

But legally, the situation was a mess. Boundary locations were marked by a pole with the owner's branding iron, "a cow's skull in a bush," or "a clump of cactus."

It was a situation that was to be source of numerous court battles for years to come.

The Yorba-Peralta Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana remained in the two families until 1865, but deaths, mar-

riages, the birth of many children and grandchildren resulted in numerous changes in titles, complicated by the problems of individual shares of ranch land.

Gradually over the years, it too was sold off.

But the ranchos left many names that are prominent in the county today — Niguel, Los Pinos, Brea, Trabuco, Santa Ana, Los Coyotes, Los Alamitos, La Habra, Bolsa Chica, San Joaquin and Los Alisos.

They left a legacy, a way of life that all but defied reality. They were overwhelmed, finally, by the inexorable march of time, events and circumstances they neither saw coming nor were prepared to meet.



INDIANS AND PADRES WORKING ON WALLS AT SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO
The Earthquake Of 1812 Destroyed The Church And Much Of The Mission



BUSINESS LIMELIGHT

By Gene Wekall
Register Business Editor

OC And The 200 Years

Commerce in Orange County in the modern sense started in 1776 with the establishment of the Mission San Juan Capistrano. The mission friars trained the Indians in agriculture, tanning of hides and various trades.

From this beginning, Orange County reached major metropolitan status in 1976 being the second largest county economically in the largest state in the country.

The county was largely agriculturally oriented until the 1940s and World War II. Many servicemen who came through the various military bases in Los Angeles, San Diego and Orange County returned after the war to settle.

Large expansions started with the opening of the Santa Ana Freeway and the builders constructed thousands of homes along the freeway route.

Industry and retail business followed with major firms selecting Orange County because of its climate, low tax base and availability of transportation. Also the high level of education and family income has attracted many major firms.

Transportation in Orange County started with the friars trading with Mexico. The land route to Mexico was shut off soon after 1776 by hostile Indians. Products from the mission were shipped to Mexico and loaded aboard the ships either off the coast from San Juan Capistrano or loaded aboard ships at San Pedro. San Pedro was the only harbor that could easily accommodate ships.

Anaheim Landing was constructed on the north bank of the Santa Ana River and ships would anchor off the landing. The Anaheim Lighter Co. was founded and these lighters would take the goods from the landing to the ships.

In 1880 Jim McFadden built what was called the McFadden Chute. He purchased some land from Jim Irvine and had a warehouse built on a bluff 60 feet above the high tide mark in Newport Bay.

This chute extended out into the bay and when a ship would come under the chute, workers at the warehouse would put sacks of grain or other products which would slide down the chute onto the ship.

There were wood barriers along the chute which were used by the operator to slow the bags as they slid along the chute.

Every so often the operator would forget to slow the bag and it would gather speed and crash through the bulkhead of the ship and spill grain all over the ship and bay.

The railroad came to Orange County with a branch line laid to Anaheim in 1875. The Southern Pacific extended it to Santa Ana in 1877. Santa Ana had a population then of 500 persons.

The road system in Orange County grew slowly until after World War II. Orange County can be called "the county populated because of a freeway."

Many persons purchased homes in Orange County during the late 1940s, the 1950s and early 1960s because of the lower cost compared with Los Angeles County. The freeway system provided the commuter with a comparatively quick way to go to work in L.A.

In the late 1960s and the 1970s, the trend changed to Orange Countians working in Orange County. The development in south Orange County grew and many shifted their residences from north county to south county.

The new business firms also brought many into the county searching for places to live near where they worked.

The history of mining in Orange County included the silver mine of Silverado which proved to be a disappointment. The mine shipped 200 tons of silver ore in 1880 which sold for \$140 per ton. Mine production dropped to 460 pounds in 1878. Costs of production with little results soon brought the demise of silver mining.

The Black Star coal mine also proved to be of little value. One Orange Countian said that coal from the mine "made more ashes than heat. It didn't even make clinkers. It came out in large chunks. Mr. Parker has had some of it

in his barn."

Trading started in Orange County with the Mission friars. Under Spanish rule the only legal markets for their products were Mexico and Spain. When markets were shut down the friars started smuggling the goods to the "Bostons." Boston was the name given to the American smuggling ships which operated out of the Port of Boston.

Paper currency was shunned by Orange County traders. Cowhide became a medium of exchange and was called the "California Banknote."

After the change of flags in 1848 the period of major trade handled mostly by the Boston ships began.

Major products were animal hides, agriculture products and wine.

Wine was old in Orange County in 1849 when grapes sold for 12.5 cents per pound. Thousands of boxes of grapes were sent through San Pedro to San Francisco. In 1866 Anaheim produced 400,000 gallons of wine. In 1867 there were 15 distillers.

The peak of the wine production was in 1894 when one million gallons were shipped. But the grapevines were infected with Pierce's disease and within three years they were all dead.

Vineyards were planted with citrus trees and Orange County became a major factor in the country citrus markets.

Oranges were shipped to London in 1875. St. Louis was another popular area for Orange County citrus.

In March of 1880 A.B. Clark of Orange took a marketing step that his neighbors laughed at. He had his personal guarantee printed on some wrappers and individually wrapped each orange. The cost of the wrappers was \$2.50 per thousand.

The neighbors stopped laughing when he sold the wrapped oranges for \$6 a box and the unwrapped ones for \$4.50 per box.

Agriculture remained the county's main source of commerce with a little manufacturing. Grist mills were established in Anaheim and Santa Ana.

Some lumber mills and yards were established. But the county grew slowly with a population of 130,760 in 1940. The number of residents grew to 216,224 by 1950. During the 1950s the county increased more than three fold to 703,295 in 1960. The peak in population growth was reached in 1963 with a growth of more than 80,000 in that year.

The increase rate dropped and the population reached more than 1.7 million in 1976.

The number of employed reached more than 600,000 in 1976 and the county has not seen its limit yet.

AN ENDLESS PARADE OF TALENT

Countians Pioneered Aviation

Probably no other area in the nation can boast a history of aviators as colorful as those who flew here beginning only a few short years after Kitty Hawk.

It has to start with Glenn L. Martin, the kid who used to soar in what today is called a hang glider off the foothills of Orange County. In 1909 he built his own plane in an abandoned church on Fourth Street in Santa Ana.

Often called a mamma's boy and admittedly girl-shy, Martin was a genius in aviation

design, an early-day barnstormer, who held many flying records, including the longest over-water flight between Newport Beach and Catalina in 1912.

Martin, with his mother, Minta, constantly at his side during these early exploits, went on to build the Martin Bomber during World War I, then became a giant of the industry during WWII, when his firm built the famed B-26 bomber, the Baltimore Bomber for the Royal Air Force, the Navy's PBM and

the huge Mars cargo and troop-carrying plane.

Martin's exploits could fill several books. "The wild kid" who liked to ride his motorcycle up and down the steps of public buildings in Santa Ana, died in 1955 and was buried in Fairhaven Cemetery.

There were other famous Martins in Orange County — Eddie and Johnny, who founded the county's first airport, later to become the Orange County Airport. Both were barnstormers in the 1920s, the epitome of the scarf-and-goggles school of flying.

Eddie continued to fly and operated the airport prior to World War II, attracting such famed aviators to the airport for periodic visits as Howard Hughes, Amelia Earhart, Charles Lindbergh, Jimmie Doolittle, Col. Roscoe Turner, and others. They were the golden eagles of their day and the Martin brothers got to know them all.

Johnny went on to become a commercial airline pilot while Eddie turned to test flying some of the nation's hottest fighter planes during WW II for Lockheed.

Prior to that, Eddie also did some commercial flying but in 1939, sold his interest in the airport to brother Floyd, founder of Martin Aviation which is still there today.

During those pre-war years, several movies were filmed around the airport, including the famous "Hell's Angels." One of the stunt pilots for that film was Paul Mantz, another Orange Countian who was to become the most famous stunt pilot in the world before he was killed in the Arizona desert, filming "The Flight of the Phoenix" in 1965.

Mantz' partner, Frank Tallman, carried on in the movie flying business, continuing to operate out of Orange County Airport. His credits are too numerous to recount, but of late they include "It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World," and "Catch 22."

The list of famous county pilots abounds, but none was more colorful than Fred Kelly of Orange, the compulsive kid who won a Gold Medal as a hurdler in the 1912 Olympics; who became an Army pilot and delighted his fellow pilots with his habit of shooting his initials into the barracks rafters with a .22 rifle at each new base. He got confined to quarters for two weeks after buzzing President

Wilson's ship as it was leaving New York Harbor for the Geneva Convention, then flying under every bridge on the East River on his way back to Mitchell Field. Kelly became one of the first pilots for Western Airlines, and was finally retired in 1951 when old injuries from a Utah plane crash caught up with him.

Kelly died in 1974 at the age of 82, but not before attending the dedication of Fred Kelly Stadium in Orange in 1969. His athletic medals are on display at nearby El Modena High School.

The 1930s was a wild time for aviation, although the nation itself had little to cheer about. Howard Hughes made history in 1935, setting a world air speed mark in his stubby monoplane over the beet fields of Santa Ana, just east of the Holly Sugar Factory. Hughes crash landed the craft after it conked out when Hughes failed to switch from an empty to full fuel tank. His mark of 352.46 m.p.h. was considered astounding at the time.

On hand to witness the feat were Amelia Earhart and Jimmy Doolittle.

Author Vi Smith, in her fascinating book on Orange County Aviation, "From Jennies to Jets," aptly sums up the guys and gals who flew and sometimes died in Orange County during the last 70 years.

"Beginning with Glenn Luther Martin...that history has been an endless parade of talent, vision, hard work and daredevilry that has spanned the years from the barnstormers to the space age.

"Surprisingly, for one of the smallest counties in the nation, Orange County has seen far more than its share of some of the greatest names in aviation and thousands of lesser ones. It is doubtful any other single area, certainly none of comparable size and population, has contributed so much or so many to the history and future of aviation.

Irvine Ranch: Agricultural Giant

James Irvine and his partners in their new Orange County ranch — Llewellyn Bixby and Ben and Thomas Flint — stocked it with Merino sheep in 1864, the year they purchased the huge spread from the rancheros.

They added to their holdings two years later when they purchased a portion of the old Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana and all of Teodosio Yorba's Rancho Lomas de Santiago, stretching their holdings into the Santa Ana Mountains. The purchases brought the total acreage of the holdings to 83,000 acres or a fifth of Orange County today.

While Bixby and the Flints tended their sheep on the ranch, Irvine remained in San Francisco with his wife, Nettie.

In 1867, their only son, James, was born. He was to be known as "J.I." and would change the ranch from a livestock operation to one of the world's outstanding agricultural operations.

In the 1860s change was coming to Orange County. Seeley and Wright inaugurated their stagecoach line between Los Angeles and San Diego, boasting you

could travel those 130 miles in just under 24 hours. A group of Germans from San Francisco were settling in Anaheim.

The trans-continental railroad wasn't far off, and Americans began looking toward California. The demand for land went up and with it the prices.

More and more people flocked to California in the 1870s, and in 1876, with land prices continuing to rise, Irvine bought out his partners to become one of the largest individual landholders in the U.S.

The second devastating drought in 20 years hit the county in 1882. Sheep herds were all but wiped out and four years later a blight destroyed hundreds of vineyards. There would never be a substantial grape crop in Orange County again.

Irvine and other growers turned to vegetables and citrus for their cash crops. The climate was ideal for oranges and scores of orange groves were planted on the Irvine Ranch and throughout the county.

Irrigated fields of vegetables flourished in the rich soil, and county farmers were

boasting of 200-pound pumpkins and corn as tall as you could reach.

On the coast, James McFadden and his brothers had built a thriving shipping business on land they had purchased from Irvine and named it Newport Beach. In 1888 they built a pier and four years later laid out the town as a beach resort.

In 1892 the brothers completed construction of the Newport Beach-Santa Ana Railroad.

The county and the rest of Southern California was booming. The Southern Pacific rails reached the state in 1876 and in 1885 came the Santa Fe.

There was little that remained of the earlier era. A few adobes and rancho houses and the decaying mission at San Juan Capistrano were about all that remained from the past.

In 1885, young "J.I." Irvine hopped on his new high wheel bicycle and pedaled from San Francisco to San Diego and got his first look at the giant ranch he would one day inherit.

In less than a year, his father died and it was his. He was just 18 years old.

In 1892 he married Anita Plum of San

Francisco and the couple had two sons, James Jr. and Myford. Their only daughter they named Kathryn Helena after their close friend Madame Helena Modjeska, the famed Polish actress for whom the canyon in Orange County is named.

In 1894, as the ranch's operations grew, Irvine incorporated his vast landholdings and called it The Irvine Co.

In a few short years, The Irvine Ranch was to become the leading grower of barley and beans in California.

In the meantime, the "people boom" continued, the cities of Santa Ana, Tustin, Buena Park, Fullerton, Orange, Westminster, Huntington Beach (originally named Pacific City until rail magnate Henry Huntington persuaded city officials they should change the name if he agreed to run his Pacific Electric cars to the beach city), as well as Anaheim and Newport Beach were springing to life.

Anaheim was the first, settled by a group of German immigrants who had been scouring the state for a prime location for a vineyard. They found it in 1857 when Orange County was still a rancho grazing area.

(Continued On Page 4)

Railroads Sparked Irvine Co., County Growth

(Continued From Page 1)

In 1859 they moved to their new settlement after 1,165 acres of land had been purchased at \$2 per acre. The community was divided into 64 lots, 14 reserved for public buildings and 50 lots of 20 acres each for farming.

After struggling over what to name their new colony the burgers decided upon Anaheim (originally spelled Annaheim, which in the rough translation of the combined Spanish and German words means "Home by the Santa Ana River").

It was the people of Anaheim who were the first to bring the railroads to Orange County and lead the move to form Orange County through a division of Los Angeles County in 1889.

A decade later, William Henry Spurgeon, with gold dust in his pockets from the Northern California gold fields, founded Santa Ana after buying 74 acres of land between the Santa Ana River and Tustin City at \$8 an acre.

The story is that when Spurgeon went to look over his property, he found a sea of mustard so tall he couldn't see over it. So he climbed a nearby Sycamore tree and sat up there for several hours, dreaming about his city and laying out the streets in his mind, planning how he would go about building his town.

Then followed such communities as Buena Park (laid out in 1886 on the premise the Santa Fe would make the town a principal stop) and Fullerton, founded by Edward and George Amerige on land they purchased in 1887 and named after George H. Fullerton, a land company official who was instrumental in having the Santa Fe reroute its tracks to the community. Tustin was named for Columbus Tustin, a farmer.

In 1868, when Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana was partitioned, two Los Angeles attorneys, Alfred Beck Chapman and Andrew Glassell received large holdings from the rancho in return for their legal services.

They named their town Orange, either for the citrus or possibly for Orange County, Virginia, Glassell's home state.

More importantly Chapman and Glassell constructed a 10-mile long ditch alongside the sothern side of the Santa Ana River. It cost \$18,000 but sup-

plied 5,000 gallons of water per minute and was eventually expanded to supply irrigation water to the farmlands in and around Tustin and Santa Ana in addition to Orange.

By 1889, when Orange County was formed, three of those cities had incorporated — Anaheim (1887), Santa Ana (1886) and Orange, (1888). Their combined population was scarcely 5,500 and the county numbered 13,59 residents.

County could boast of 20,000 residents. Seventy years later, it would be pushing the 1.7 million mark.

It was the railroads that were building Orange County in those early years, first the steam locomotives of the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific, then the Red Cars of the Pacific Electric.

The Southern Pacific arrived in Anaheim in 1875, and Spurgeon believed that a rail connection was so important to his Santa Ana that he and other residents paid the S.P. \$25,000 to link up with their city.

The S.P. wanted to connect Orange County with San Diego but gave up when it failed to obtain a right-of-way across the Irvine Ranch, which straddled the county from the ocean to the Santa Ana Mountains.

The Santa Fe succeeded in its attempt at getting such a right-of-way in 1887, connecting Fullerton with San Diego.

And it was the big steamers that were instrumental in spurring still more agricultural and citrus production. Giant warehouses sprung up along its tracks as the long freights moved in and out of the county with their rich agrarian cargo bound for all points across the U.S.

To the west in the late 1870s came Civil War veterans to make a squatter's claim to 18,000 acres known as Gospel Swamp, so named for its use by evangelists as a meeting place.

John Bushard was one of the first to settle in that area, and between 1880 and 1890, others were to follow who would become well known names in the county — William Newland, Samuel Talbert and his brother Thomas, Bruce Wardlow and P. A. Stanton.

It was Samuel Talbert who laid down the first township in that area and became known as Talbert after President William McKinley granted the first post office there in the name of Talbert.

It later was to be named Fountain Valley. Talbert also spent \$200 to have the first telephone lines strung into the village by the Sunset Telephone and Telegraph Co.

Still further west, P. A. Stanton, John Anderson and Col. S. H. Finley of Santa Ana obtained an option on 1,500 acres of the La Bolsa ranch from R. J. Northam on land that sloped to the Pacific.

They later bought the land for \$100,000 and laid out the town of Pacific City in 1901.

That same year came the electric cars, the West's first mass transit system.

The Pacific Electric, founded by Henry E. Huntington, successfully competed with the steam lines with frequent service between Southland cities.

Its tracks radiated from Los Angeles, then a city of 100,000, and the cars first came to Orange County in 1902, running through Whittier to Yorba Linda.

The second line ran to Santa Ana via Garden Grove and Cypress. The third and last track skirted the coastline, linking Seal Beach, Huntington Beach, Newport Beach and Balboa in 1906.

Original plans to extend the lines into Corona in Riverside County, and to San Diego were scrapped with the growing popularity of the automobile.

The Big Red Cars, as they were called, brought still more residents to Orange County as Los Angelenos discovered the delights of Orange County with its beautiful beaches and citrus groves.

The commuting out of L.A. and around Orange County was easy and frequent with regular excursions to all populated areas of the county.

The Big Red Cars became world-famous, with travelers riding them for pleasure and sightseeing.

The most popular was the Triangle Trip, which took riders from Los Angeles to Santa Ana, Huntington Beach, Long Beach and back to Los Angeles via San Pedro.

Slumbering like an awakened giant stood the Irvine Ranch. There was little pressure on James Irvine to develop his vast acreage. The boom was going all about him though and he did sell off some small acreage for home sites for his employes and a few small communities such as a place called East Irvine.

But its time was coming. This was but a mini-boom compared to what was ahead.

The U.S. went to war in 1917 and the Irvine Ranch, which had been making the transition from grazing to farming since 1895, pitched in for the war effort by planting 60,000 acres of lima beans which yielded nearly one million sacks in 1918.

Sugar beets were also being grown with a refinery to process them. The San Francisco earthquake of 1906 had destroyed most of Irvine's office building and other real estate holdings and he had moved south to personally run the ranch.

The war had done little to transform the county, as it would two decades later during and after World War II.

But in November 1920, there was a roar from the earth's depths that would transform the bucolic tranquility of Orange County forever.

Bolsa Chica well No. 1 in Huntington Beach came in with an explosive force that could be heard for 15 miles, spewing 20,000 barrels of oil a day over the lands around it. Downtown Huntington Beach was awash in oil before a dike was built to contain the onrush of black gold.

Strike after strike followed as new wells went in on Reservoir Hill and the city's beachgoers did their sunbathing in the shadows of a forest of oil derricks.

Millionaires and speculators from all over the world flocked to the once-quiet seaside city and Huntington Beach and Orange County would never again be the same.

The Huntington Beach field became the state's second largest oil producer, a position it still holds today.

In the same year, 1920, not too many miles to the northeast, Walter and Cordelia Knott leased 10 acres of rich farmland in a quiet, wide open part of the county near Buena Park.

Knott couldn't have picked a better place to raise and sell his berries. The land was rich, underground water was ample and a railroad was nearby.

But it wasn't used as farmland until Knott arrived. His scattered neighbors raised hogs, chickens and grazed dairy cattle.

the chicken dinner restaurant, until Mrs. Knott could count a million customers annually.

A candy kitchen was added, followed by shops and then the "Roaring Twenties" attractions of the past few years. Along the way, Knott also built his exact replica of Independence Hall. Knott's Berry Farm became one of the world's most famous recreation attractions.

Despite the oil boom, Orange County was still a quiet place during the 1920s and '30s. Orange groves and bean fields wove their contrasting patterns across the landscape.

In fact, about the only real "action" took place on James Irvine's ranch when a Hollywood crew came down to shoot the battle scenes for the soon-to-be movie "All Quiet on the Western Front."

The film was shot right on the spot where the Irvine Coast Country Club reposes today. The flick, starring Lew Ayres, could be called the first truly anti-war film.

There wasn't much to cheer about during the 1930s, what with the Depression holding the nation in a grip of despair. But the artists in Laguna Beach made things a little brighter when, in 1932, they held the first Festival of the Arts. The Pageant of the Masters was begun in 1933.

Also in 1932, the Santiago Canyon Dam was built, creating Irvine Lake, one of the county's top recreational spots.

More than a few people wondered about that dam on March 10, 1933, when a fault line running from Inglewood to Newport Beach suddenly slipped and Orange County was hit by still another devastating quake.

As buildings by the hundreds toppled in Long Beach, the county cities of Huntington Beach, Garden Grove, Santa Ana, and Orange received a series of solid jolts.

The county court house, completed in 1901, was badly shaken and in one of the aftershocks that followed for days, its corners buckled and there was substantial damage to the roof.

A few blocks away, buildings collapsed in downtown Santa Ana. The clock atop the Spurgeon building stopped as the first shake hit at 5:55 p.m. An Oakland couple honeymooning in Santa Ana, rushed out into the street when it hit and perished under a collapsing wall. Another man died at Fourth and Ross streets and a little girl sitting on the front steps of Garden Grove High School was also killed by falling masonry.

Downtown Santa Ana was a rubble of bricks and masonry. The staff of the then Santa Ana Register moved their desks out of their building at Fifth and Sycamore streets and wrote their stories there while the guys in the back shop stayed by their machines amid falling rubble to get out the first stories to the world about the worst earthquake to hit Southern California in recorded history.

Entire areas of downtown Huntington Beach and Santa Ana were roped off. There were 150 recorded aftershocks. There hasn't been a shake like it since in this area.

Strangely, Newport Beach, nearest the epicenter, suffered little damage. The Santiago Dam held.

In 1935, "Jase" Irvine, vice president of the Irvine Co. for a number of years, and son of James Irvine, died of tuberculosis. He was survived by a daughter, Joan, who later as Joan Irvine Smith, was to wage a monumental battle to break up the Irvine Foundation which her grandfather had set up in 1937 to dispense 54 per cent of Irvine Ranch earnings to charitable and educational causes. She lost.

In the late 1930s, Hitler was building Nazi Germany into an arsenal. Of greater importance to Orange County, Japan was talking about her peaceful "co-prosperity sphere" while casting envious and ominous eyes toward the vast resources of the Far East and South Pacific.

It all ended in a blinding flash at Pearl Harbor and pastoral Orange County would never be the same again.

The Knott's first sold their berries from a roadside stand, but soon, he was shipping them to local and Los Angeles County markets.

Each basket was wrapped in clean, attractive paper, unheard of until then, and the Knott line was extended to include jams and jellies prepared by Mrs. Knott.

Between 1920 and 1940, Knott acquired 200 acres for cultivation and he became known throughout the world as the "Berry King."

A foreman of the farm, a man named Boysen, de-

veloped a new variety of berry and the Knott fame continued to grow. Knott also grew and shipped hundreds of varieties of berry plants around the world, guaranteeing they would grow or be replaced.

Things got tough during the Depression and Mrs. Knott began serving her chicken dinners in the family dining room on the family's best China. This operation also grew as countians streamed to the new Chicken Dinner restaurant.

Then after the war, Knott got the idea of recreating the California of the gold rush and ghost town eras and the farm took on a new dimension.

Ghost Town grew and so did



**MC FADDEN BROTHERS BOUGHT NEWPORT BEACH SITE FROM IRVINE
By The 1920s Railroads Had Made The Community A Thriving Beach Resort**