

LA CASA DEL RANCHO CAMUELOS
Piru, California
Ventura Co.

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey,
Henry F. Withey - District Officer,
906 Architects Building,
Los Angeles, Calif.

A part of the original Rancho San Francisco, which took in the present towns of Castaic, Newhall, Saugus and Piru. The part on which the house is situated near Piru was retained and called Rancho Camulos. The grant was made in 1839 to Lt. Antonio Del Valle, grandfather of the last Del Valle owner, and this was used as his residence until his death in 1841 or 1842.*

About this time gold was discovered on the rancho by one Francisco Lopez, majordomo of San Fernando Mission, while digging wild onions. The nuggets were found hanging in the roots. The first California gold coined at the Philadelphia mint came from these mines.

Ignacio Del Valle inherited Rancho Camulos at the death of his father, and lived there until his own death in 1880. His wife, Senora Ysabel Del Valle, was in active charge of the estate at the time of Mrs. Helen Hunt Jackson's visit there in 1882 and became the original "Senora Morena" of the novel "Ramona". Mrs. Jackson was so impressed with the typical atmosphere of the rancho of early Spanish and Mexican California, that she used it in her novel as "Ramona's Home". **

Mrs. Jackson has faithfully described the family chapel, the bells, the old brick winery, the spring and washing-place, the grape arbor, the olive mill, and other interesting features which remain.

It is now owned and maintained as a dwelling by Mr. August Rubel.

* Mr. Rubel, the owner, gives the date of erection as 1841 for the older portion, the balance having been added in 1846.

** Rexford Newcomb " Old Mission Churches and Historic Houses of California" 1925. p. 344-352.

Approved

Henry J. Withey
District Officer