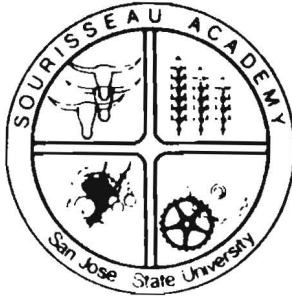
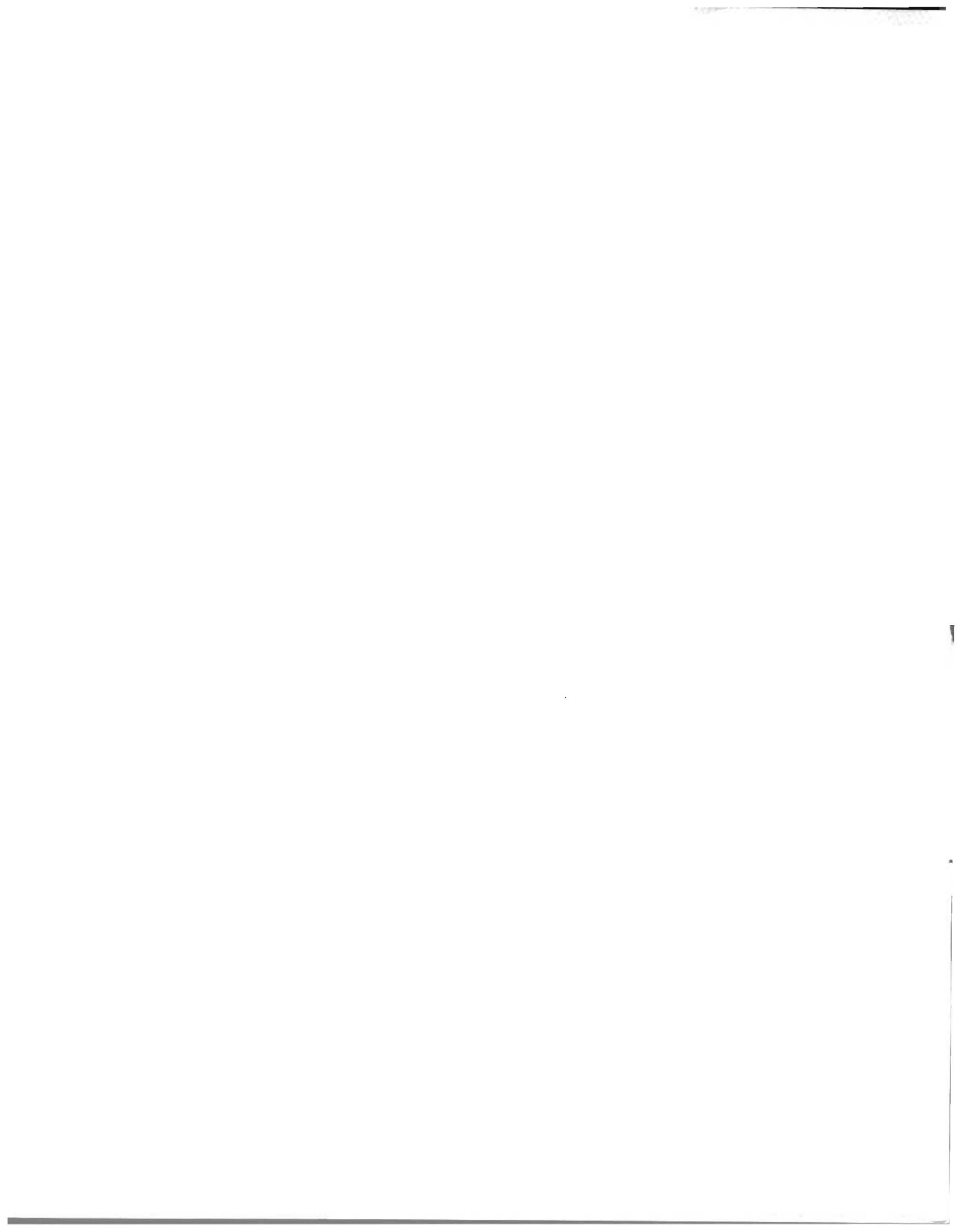


WITNESS TO EMPIRE
THE LIFE OF ANTONIO MARÍA SUÑOL

by
James P. Delgado



Sourisseau Academy for California State and Local History
San Jose State University





ANTONIO MARIA SUÑOL

Painting by an Unidentified Artist, San Jose Historical Museum

This is Dedicated to my teachers
and good friends Ben Gilbert, Ted
Hinckley, and Charles Burdick of
the Department of History, San Jose
State University.

PREFACE

To many Californians, the name Suñol, if they have heard it all, conjures up the image of a small town nestled in the foothills of Alameda County. It does not bring to mind a short, rosy-cheeked and plump man whom one contemporary noted looked like a French pastry chef. That man was Antonio Maria Suñol, political refugee, prominent California businessman, ranchero, politician, and creditor of John Sutter. Suñol's impact on his neighbors and on the region was while not of overwhelming significance important to the procession of history in the tiny settlement of San José and in California. Suñol through his many associations and influence was a participant in the great events which molded this State; he was in every sense of the word a witness to empire. He saw the fall of the house of Bourbon in Spain, the rise and fall of Napoleonic glory, the demise of hispanic California, the creation of a vast inland empire in California by adventurer John Sutter and the destruction of that empire, and the social upheaval caused as the California Gold Rush forever altered the destiny of the State.

Though largely scattered, the papers and ephemera relating to the life of Antonio Suñol offer a portrait, albeit at times dimmed by time and marred by the omissions forced by lack of documentation, of the man. Mentioned often in passing by his contemporaries, Antonio Suñol has been a mysterious figure in the annals of California history. This first attempt at placing him in historical perspective is offered as the primary step in fully interpreting the story of Suñol, his times, and his influence in the course of human events in California.

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

ONE	<i>The Early Years: 1797-1823</i>	1-9
TWO	<i>Businessman</i>	10-18
THREE	<i>Ranchero</i>	19-27
FOUR	<i>Captain Sutter and his Fort</i>	28-35
FIVE	<i>"A Man of note and influence"</i>	36-44
SIX	<i>Clouds of War</i>	45-54
SEVEN	<i>Gold and Glamour</i>	55-63
EIGHT	<i>Trial and Ordeal</i>	64-73
NINE	<i>The Last Years: 1855-1865</i>	74-83
TEN	<i>Legacy</i>	84-88
APPENDICES:		
	<i>Selected Correspondence of Don Antonio Suñol, Sub Prefecto</i>	89-95
	<i>Petition to the Congress of the United States</i>	96-101
	<i>Last Will and Testament</i>	102-103
	<i>Descendants</i>	104-105
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	106-112

FOREWARD

Witness to Empire, a definitive biography of Antonio María Suñol, recreates one of the most significant periods in California's history and provides a full dimensional insight to many early prominent pioneers. James Delgado investigated the circumstances that caused Spanish-born Suñol to be educated in France and serve in its navy by unraveling the secrecy of his early life. It began during the Napoleonic Wars when brutal warfare raged across the Spanish countryside. Later when Antonio Suñol arrived in California he eventually fulfilled his historic destiny by becoming an integral part of both the political and social history of *El Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe* and northern California. Mr. Delgado has covered every facet of this complex personality who was not only a wealthy ranchero but an astute businessman, philanthropist, urban planner and political leader. Today place and street names throughout the region testify to his significance.

Exhaustive research has amassed data culminating in hard to find private and official correspondence substantiating Suñol's affiliations with men who shaped the pattern of western history. These included Captain John Augustus Sutter, John Charles Frémont, Peter H. Burnett, Thomas Oliver Larkin, Charles Wilkes, Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo and Eugene Duflot du Mofras. Suñol's humanitarian concern for the fate of the *californios*, land grant litigation and the decline of hispanic California gives the book a special poignancy and meaning. Witness to Empire is supplemented with extensive footnotes, previously unpublished data, sketches and photographs which will prove useful to historians, scholars and laymen. It is also a commendable contribution to California's literary frontier.

Frances L. Fox

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many good friends have taken the time and trouble as this narrative was assembled to offer careful and insightful criticisms and advice. To them I am indeed grateful. All mistakes and omissions are my responsibility despite their gracious assistance. For Dolores Ramona Sainsevain Turek, I have only admiration and warm remembrance of her many suggestions and support as she inspired me with her family story. To Dr. Benjamin Franklin Gilbert, Professor of History at San Jose State University, to whom I initially turned to for advice and who guided me in the preparation of this story I am deeply indebted. John Bruzzone, who has restored Antonio Sunol's last standing residence, offered support and the opportunity to interpret the story of Antonio Maria Sunol to those who visited the Balermينو-Sunol Adobe, also known as the Roberto Adobe; I am grateful. The many contributions and kindnesses of Clyde Arbuckle, the late Father Arthur J. Spearman, S.J., Frances L. Fox, Ben Churillo, Herbert L. and Edna Hagemann, Lynn Vermillion, Clara Sunol, Dr. Abraham P. Nasitir, Father Gerald S. McKivett, S.J., Father Arthur J. Lenti, S.D.B., Dr. Ted C. Hinckley, William A. Wulf, Christopher C. Wade, Constance B. Perham, the late Alora Joice Rice, and Robert Delgado are also gratefully acknowledged. The staffs of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, the Society of California Pioneers Library, San Francisco, the California State Library, Sacramento, the California Historical Society Library, San Francisco, the California History Room, San Jose Public Library, the San Jose Historical Museum, and the San Francisco History Room and Archives, San Francisco Public Library were most helpful. To those whose contributions I may have forgotten my apologies and indebtedness are acknowledged.

James P. Delgado
San Jose State University
December 1977

CHAPTER 1: *The Early Years: 1797-1823*

Antonio María Suñol, for many years a resident of the province of *Alta California* was not a member of the *Californio* class, the hispanic natives of California. Rather Suñol was born a Spaniard in the Spanish province of Catalonia. His Spanish origin and his advanced formal education would set him apart from his neighbors during his California years in one sense; at the same time Antonio Suñol, although a trifle arrogant and pretentious, was an indispensable man and an affable host. This, with his business acumen and shrewd politics, making him indispensable. Involved in many of the major social movements of his time and place, and associated with the great figures who molded the early history of California, Antonio María Suñol was a witness to empire as California evolved from an agrarian and ranching province into one of the principal states of the Union.

Suñol's early, pre-California years are vague and any attempt to offer more than a few facts fleshed with the attendant conclusions would be purely conjectural. Nonetheless, certain factors become apparent which clearly demonstrate Antonio Suñol's immigration to California and his predisposition to French culture and society. According to the record of his marriage in California at the *Mision de Santa Clara de Asis*, Antonio María Suñol was the natural son of Geronimo Suñol and Francesca Rosas of Barcelona and was born on June 13, 1797.¹ Geronimo Suñol was apparently a member of the Spanish middle class, perhaps even minor nobility. Family tradition records that a female relative was

a handmaiden to the Queen of Spain, a position usually occupied by a member of the minor nobility. Geronimo Suñol was also apparently a member of the *afrancesados*, Spaniards with close ties to France and adherents to French language, culture, and ideals. With the proximity of Barcelona to the French border, the emergence of such a class in Spain was inevitable, particularly when contrasted to the political instability of the Spanish Empire. Spain's vast New World holdings were gradually growing stronger and manifesting signs of incipient nationalism which would within a few decades blossom into wars of independence. Her economy and culture stifled by the expulsion of Spain's Arabic and Jewish population, which had included most of the nation's craftsmen and intellectuals, and oppressively regulated by the Holy Office of the Inquisition, Spain was ruled in name by a weak and incompetent monarch, Carlos IV and in fact by Prime Minister Manuel Godoy. Spain was existing much as it had in centuries past, intellectually, economically, and socially behind neighboring countries. France, after its revolution and the rise of Napoleon, dominated Europe. French values, particularly the ideals of the French Revolution, were attractive to Spain's limited intellectual community, most of whom were members of the middle class.

Unfortunately for Antonio Suñol he was born at a time when massive political movements were changing the destiny of Europe. Napoleonic expansion brought the French to Spain as a bloodless coup placed the throne of Spain in French hands. Under the rule of Joseph Bonaparte,

brother of Napoleon, Spain at first peacefully accepted the change of governments. Napoleon, believing that the *afrancesado* sentiments were predominate acquired yet another satellite for the French Empire. However, while many Spaniards were sympathetic to French ideals, they could not tolerate a foreign army of occupation or a French King. The result was violent resistance to the French yoke, resistance which soon became a bloody guerilla war of rebellion. Many Spaniards turned with a sudden and terrible ferocity to the French, who responded with an equal ferocity:

French soldiers sacked the churches, carried away objects of veneration, profaned the host. The village priests slaughtered the French who sought refuge among them. Farms were left burning like torches when the French had passed by. The wounded and the ill were murdered as they were being taken from one place to another. The roads were strewn with denuded corpses; the trees were weighed down with the bodies of men hanged; blind hate was loosed against hate, a nameless terror roamed the deserted countryside, death came slowly through the most frightful mutilations.²

The war broke into earnest carnage in 1808 as Antonio Suñol entered his eleventh year of life. Again according to family tradition, the Sunol's had housed a French officer during the occupation. As the war raged with increasing ferocity, and as England invaded the Iberian peninsula to join with Spanish patriots in driving the French from Spain, the officer, now a family friend, apparently offered to take Antonio with him to France. Inasmuch as the gruesome war against the French also included as enemies the *afrancesados*, it may have been with great relief that Geronimo and Francesca Suñol sent their son away from the danger. It is possible that

they suffered the fate they feared; in later life as far as is known Sunol never referred to any family members or relatives in Spain.

Apparently a resident of France by 1810, Suñol most probably left Barcelona in 1808 at the outbreak of the war. In later life Suñol carried a small engraving of Saint Anthony, on the back of which he had inscribed a message which in part read "*este santo me a acompañado en la guerra de anno de 1808....*"³ or, "this saint accompanied me during the war of the year of 1808...." It may have been a small keepsake pressed into his hand by his parents and faithfully carried on the perilous trek into France. In his new country, Suñol apparently resided in Bordeaux on the French coast, where he attended the *lycée*. In his later California years Suñol would enroll his son in the same school. Apparently studying the French language, mathematics, engineering, architecture, and the other rudiments of a classical education. Suñol may have also learned the duties of a French Naval cadet if family tradition can again be believed. He did serve in the French Navy; in 1841, Suñol was visited in California by visiting French official Eugene Dufлот du Mofras. According to d Mofras report, Suñol, "originally of Barcelona, has served in the French Navy and was aboard the *Epervier* at Rochefort in 1815 when the Emperor left that ship to board the *Bellerphon*." ⁴ Thus at the early age of seventeen Suñol was already a witness to empire as a finally defeated Napoleon boarded H.M.S. *Bellerphon* to be exiled.

Suñol's career after the defeat of Napoleon is unclear. His family later stated that he was one of the company of the French transport *le Meduse*, which in 1816 was dispatched to the French colony of Algeria with a new garrison. The vessel was wrecked off the African coast, compelling the ship's complement to take to the sea. Many suffered in the ship's boats under the hot sun while another one hundred and fifty less fortunate souls adrift on a raft formed from the broken timbers of *le Meduse* whose numbers were reduced to fifteen by the sun, sharks, and cannibalism. The survivors were returned to France, and if Antonio Suñol was indeed one of that company, he returned to France long enough to sign on for another sea voyage, this one on the armed merchantman *Bordelais*, which was to sail from Bordeaux on a year-long world-wide voyage of trade and exploration under the command of naval officer Camille de Rocquefeuil.⁵ Apparently shipping as a common seaman, Suñol was on board the *Bordelais* as she cleared for foreign waters in October of 1816.⁶

After rounding Cape Horn the ship arrived at the *Presidio de San Francisco, Alta California* on August 15, 1817.⁷ Reprovisioning, she journeyed north to the Russian Alaskan colony at Sitka, and thence to Bristol Bay's icy waters. Suñol still carried his engraving of Saint Anthony, for its' back was also inscribed with the notation that the saint accompanied him through the war of 1808 "y en la navegacion esta la baia de Bristol."⁸ In Bristol Bay several of the men became ill, forcing the *Bordelais* into warmer waters south. After a brief stop at the Russian California colony at Fort Ross, the *Bordelais* re-entered San Francisco Bay on October 16, 1817.⁹

There the ill seamen were sent ashore to recuperate or die; among them was Antonio Suñol.¹⁰ The *Bordelais* remained at anchor for three weeks while waiting for the men to recover. Finally, on November 20, 1817 she sailed leaving behind four men too ill to travel, including Sunol.¹¹ Later accounts state that Suñol "jumped ship" or deserted at San Francisco. Clearly it was a case of the ship leaving Suñol, not Suñol leaving the ship. When *Bordelais* returned for the third and last time in September of 1818, no mention was made of the four men, and on October 20, 1818 the ship cleared for home without Antonio Suñol. By that time Sunol had apparently recovered sufficiently under the care of the priests of *Mision San Francisco de Asis* to travel to the nearby *Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe*. Founded in 1777 as California's first civil settlement, San José by 1818 had grown from sixty-six to two hundred and forty-five residents within the space of forty one years. Largely a settlement of small thatched *palizadas* and a few more substantial *casas de adobe*, San José at the time of Sunol's arrival was governed by *Sargento* Luis Maria Peralta of the Spanish Army, who served as *comisionado* or military head of the *Pueblo's* government. Peralta's modest two-room home, which would have been Sunol's first stop in San José, survives as the last tie to the old settlement in modern San José and has been restored as a historic park in downtown San José.¹²

Suñol was the first foreign settler to arrive in San Jose; he was also among the first fifteen foreign settlers to arrive in California, the first being John Cameron, also known as John Gilroy, who arrived in 1814.¹³ Suñol had arrived in the waning Spanish authority in California. In 1821 Mexico successfully gained her independence from Spain and acquired California as a part of her new nation. When the news arrived in California and the



JUAN PABLO BERNAL, SUNOL'S BROTHER-IN-LAW

Courtesy of Zlypha Bernal Beck, Livermore, California.

inhabitants of the region swore allegiance to the new government, Antonio Suñol was among the ranks, attesting to his desire to remain in this far-flung corner of the hispanic world. This may well have been due to the influence of the family of José Joaquin Bernal of San José. Bernal, a retired soldier with a large family, had apparently made young Suñol's acquaintance. It is possible that the shrewd Bernal, at that time amassing a large cattle herd, the means of wealth in California, had seen in the educated Suñol the power to achieve even more wealth through the benefits of that education. Whatever the motivation, Suñol's fortune and that of the Bernal family merged on September 7, 1823 when Suñol wed Maria de los Dolores Bernal at the *Mision Santa Clara de Asis*.¹⁴ The union, which was to last twenty-two years, produced eight children, the first of which was a son, José Antonio Suñol, who was born in 1825. Two more sons, José Dolores and José Narciso, and five daughters, Francisca, apparently named for Antonio's mother, Paula, Antonta, Encarnacion, and Marcelina Suñol followed.

By taking the oath of loyalty in 1822 Antonio Suñol had severed the ties to his earlier life in Napoleonic Europe. With his marriage and the birth of his first child, Suñol had firmly established himself in California; he was now a citizen, husband, and father. The long voyage that had begun in Barcelona had concluded.

CHAPTER 1: *The Early Years: 1797-1823*

FOOTNOTES:

- ¹Most of the information concerning Suñol's life in Spain and France comes from many individual conversations and interviews with his great-granddaughter, Mrs. Dolores Ramona Sainsevain Turek, who related this fact in April of 1977.
- ²Vallentin, Antonina; This I Saw: The Life and Times of Goya. (New York: Random House, 1949.) Page 259.
- ³As quoted in an unidentified newspaper article entitled "The Suñol's Adobe Ruin." This may have been written by Mrs. Cora Fremont Older for her series of articles entitled "Early Days in the Santa Clara Valley," which was published in the San Jose News between 1926 and 1927. Courtesy of Frances L. Fox Collection.
- ⁴Wilbur, Marguerite Eyer, Trans.; Duflot du Mofras' Travels on the Pacific Coast. (Santa Ana: The Fine Arts Press, 1937.) 1:219.
- ⁵Nasitir, Abraham P.; French Activities in California (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1943.) Page 2.
- ⁶Guinn, J.M.; History of the State of California and Biographical Record of Oakland and Environs. (Los Angeles: Historic Record Company, 1907) 1:365-366. Guinn gives a long, interesting, but hopelessly garbled and incorrect account of Suñol's life from which only a few true facts can be extracted.
- ⁷Nasitir, Page 3.
- ⁸"Suñol's Adobe Ruin" clipping. See Footnote #3.
- ⁹Nasitir, Page 3
- ¹⁰Bancroft, Hubert Howe; History of California. (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft and Company, 1888; reprinted by Wallace Heberd of Santa Barbara, 1970) 2:289
- ¹¹Bancroft, 2:289
- ¹²The story of Peralta and his adobe is ably recounted in Frances L. Fox's San José's Luis Maria Peralta and his Adobe. (San Jose: Smith and McKay, 1976) The Peralta Adobe, located at 184 West St. John Street in San Jose and is open to the public with no admission charge. The adobe, which is California State Landmark #866, was restored and opened to the public on August 25, 1976.

FOOTNOTES (CONTINUED):

¹³Bancroft, 2:382. Gilroy married Maria Clara de la Ascencion Ortega, the daughter of Ygnacio Maria Ortega, grantee of Rancho San Isidro in Santa Clara County. The present day Town of Gilroy is named for this early pioneer.

¹⁴Viader, Jose; Entry #2104 in the *Libro de Matrimonios, 1; Mision de Santa Clara de Asis*. Archives, University of Santa Clara.

CHAPTER 2: *Businessman*

To earn a living for his growing family, Antonio Suñol did not necessarily have to resort to ranching or farming like his Californio neighbors. Since he was one of the few educated men in San José, his services as a scribe were probably put to good use by many who could not write their own correspondence. This was not an uncommon practice in early California.

Suñol possessed a skill that he could not have learned; rather, it was an inherent part of his character. Antonio Suñol was a consummate businessman. He started his business career, evidently, by selling cattle for his father-in-law. For years California had been visited by foreign trade ships, who, in return for the Californio's hides and tallow, would exchange mercantile items. The traders were hard bargainers, though, and it was often said that for a wagon-load of hides a man could carry his purchases off the ship in his handkerchief. This could not be said for Antonio Suñol, however. If the traders were hard bargainers, they could not strike a hard bargain as Suñol could. Suñol could trade as well as the foreign traders, and as a result he received more for his hides. Evidently Bernal allowed Suñol a percentage of what he generated, allowing Antonio a chance to accumulate enough revenue to support his family.

Sometime around 1820 Suñol had accumulated enough capital to open and stock a small shop in his adobe home on the *plaza* of the *pueblo*. This appears to have been San José's first mercantile establishment.

In his shop Suñol not only sold merchandise he had traded with the ships for, but candles and soap that he had personally manufactured.¹ In addition to these goods, Suñol also sold liquor that he had distilled. This makes Suñol the first layman in San José to manufacture alcohol for sale. Suñol consequently established San José's first "grog shop."²

On July 19, 1823, Suñol's liquor selling activities came under the scrutiny of the government. Governor Luis Arguello wrote *Alcalde* Juan Alvires that "Antonio Suñol had introduced into the Pueblo a quantity of rum and honey to sell at retail, concocting therefrom a drink that was causing much harm. He

called for an investigation."³ The investigation must have dispelled the governor's fears, for Suñol continued to sell liquor at his store for decades afterwards. By 1841, his small stock had grown to an impressive 18 barrels of domestic liquor, 3½ barrels of domestic wine, and one barrel of imported wine.⁴ He paid \$90.40 in taxes for his sales, which indicates that his product sold well. By 1846 his sales had apparently doubled with an on-hand stock of 48 barrels.⁵

In addition to his store, Suñol also sold redwood lumber to his neighbors; lumber he purchased from foreign lumberjacks, usually Americans, who operated small sawpits in the California redwood forests. Suñol purchased both lumber and redwood shingles, which he then sold to his neighbors for a large profit. Suñol dealt with many lumberjacks who would later become respected citizens of the State of California; one of which was John Coppinger, who resided near the present day Town of Woodside in San Mateo County. The following piece of correspondence details only one of Coppinger and his fellow lumberjack's dealings with Antonio Suñol:⁶

Mr. John Coppinger

*Sor pay to Thomas Bowin the ammount sic of
shingles you delivered to Suñol belonging to
me delivered in my a/c to Prado Mesa.*

Yours & etc.

George A. Ferguson

George Ferguson, who wrote this letter, had other business dealings with Suñol that will be discussed later.

By 1825, Suñol's fortunes were definitely rising. His store was doing an active business. He may have also traded hides and tallow for many of the local *rancheros*, gaining even larger profits. Suñol by this time also had his own hides to trade as well, for there was no minted coin for California. Most trade was done through barter, and many doubtless purchased items from Suñol's store for hides, which were the equivalent of about two dollars. Suñol would then store the hides in anticipation of the arrival of the next trade ship.

Suñol would then load his hides, along with the hides of any other who had asked Suñol to trade for him, and float them on his launch down the *Arroyo de Guadalupe* and into San Francisco Bay, where the waiting trade ship would be anchored. One such ship, the Brookline, from the United States, recorded her transaction with Suñol on July 30, 1829:⁷

I returned to the ship by land in company with Mr. Welsh--the following morning Mr. G. and Don Antonio Suñol arrived on the St. Jose launch with a full cargo of hides, etc.

In addition to the merchandise he received in trade, Suñol may have also accumulated some cash. Whatever cash he had he kept in a redwood strong-box in his store. This may have functioned as San José's first bank, for many residents of the *Pueblo* kept their cash in Suñol's strong-box for safe keeping. As the only individual in San José who commanded large sums of cash, Suñol was approached often for loans and for backing in business ventures. More often than not Suñol was able to collect the debt with no problem, but occasionally he had to resort to legal measures to regain his money. One such case was in 1829, when Suñol was forced to turn to the officials of the *Pueblo* in order to collect a debt of two hundred and forty-four pesos from José Palomares, who had borrowed the money to purchase horses. There is no record as to whether the debt was paid.⁸

Suñol also extended credit to his neighbors, which from time to time also created problems. American trader Faxon Dean Atherton recorded a visit to Suñol in 1836, "but could make no trade, he having left off making purchases to endeavour to collect his debts."⁹

The largest recorded amount that Suñol lost was the money he spent in 1824 in setting up a mine operation some three miles south of San José. He had become interested in the project when he was approached by Luis Chaboya and the brothers Secundino and Teodoro Robles, who had visited a mine in the hills south of San José. They had been led there by an Indian servant, who showed them a red rock that the Indians had previously used as a body paint. The rock had been used as a pigment for some of the paint used to decorate Mission Santa Clara, and it was apparently there that Chaboya and the brothers Robles first saw the red rock. Convinced that the rock was the ore of some

type of mineral. They then consulted Suñol, who also believed the rock to be an ore, perhaps that of silver. Convinced the mine was of some potential, Suñol invested four hundred dollars in an effort to develop it.¹⁰ According to Suñol, "myself and Chaboya put a mill there on the stream, and tried to get silver out of it; this was in the year 1824."¹¹

The mill referred to was on the banks of the Alamitos Creek in today's Almaden Valley. The mine was abandoned after a year's unsuccessful work.¹² What Suñol and his partners had failed to realize that the ore was not of silver; it was Cinnabar (Mercuric Oxide), the ore of Mercury. This fact was to remain undiscovered until 1845, when Andres Castellero discovered the mine to be a large deposit of cinnabar. This mine became the world famous New Almaden Quicksilver Mines and in their heyday produced over seven million dollars worth of Mercury!¹³

The rise of Suñol's fortunes coincided with his rise in social stature. A valuable and respected member of the San José community, he was not expelled in 1830 when the Mexican government called for the expulsion from California of all persons of Spanish birth.¹⁴ Suñol was allowed to stay under a special provision which excluded Spaniards who were "physically disabled...over sixty years old, such as were married to Mexican wives or had children who were not Spaniards...such by taking the oath of allegiance might remain."¹⁵

By this time Suñol's in-laws had moved from San Jose onto lands lying to south that were known as "Santa Teresa." As early as 1823 Joaquin Bernal had herded cattle on the lands, and in 1826 he had been granted permission to settle the lands with his family. Many of the Bernal family members lived at Santa Teresa, including Antonio Suñol, who was there as early as 1832.¹⁶ Suñol also maintained a residence in the *Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe*.

In 1834 Joaquin Bernal decided to petition the government for legal title to the Santa Teresa lands. On May 10th, 1834, Suñol drew up a formal petition in his father-in-law's name asking for the lands. The government, after due consideration, granted the *Rancho de Santa Teresa* to Bernal on July 11, 1834.¹⁷



ANTONIO MARIA PICO, SUNOL'S BROTHER-IN-LAW AND
PARTNER IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE PUEBLO
DE SAN JOSE'S CHURCH AND THE RANCHO EL VALLE

Courtesy of Herbert L. Hagemann and Edna Hagemann, Livermore, California

Suñol also had good fortune in garnering land of his own. Gradually he began to acquire land in San Jose, especially lots bordering his own house site, so that he eventually owned most of the western side of the *plaza*. He also owned a lot on the northeast corner of the *plaza* which he donated to the Fathers at Mission Santa Clara so that they could erect a new church for the *Pueblo*.

Suñol had noticed the poor repair of the old church, which he could easily see from his front door. Built in 1803, the tiny adobe building had been damaged by earthquakes and was in danger of collapse. Being a devout Catholic, Suñol urged the Fathers of the Mission, who had religious jurisdiction over the *Pueblo*, to sanction the erection of a new church.¹⁸

In 1835, in order to allow for the expansion of the church, Suñol deeded his lot on the northeast corner of the *Plaza* to the church. He further agreed to assist the then *Alcalde*, Antonio María Pico, in the building of the new church.¹⁹ Pico was married to Maria del Pilar Bernal and was hence Suñol's brother-in-law. The two men, aided by Indian laborers, worked for almost eight years to complete the new building. Shaped somewhat like a "dutch barn," the new church served San José until the 1860's. A new building was erected in 1877, and still stands to mark the site of Suñol's church, which would be located in the area of the main altar of the present church. This church, San Jose's St. Joseph's, has continuously served San Jose for over one hundred and seventy four years and is the oldest house of worship in the City.

Suñol's gift of the new church was not his only contribution to the Catholic Fathers of Mission Santa Clara. "He believed in sharing his good fortune with his church and over the years made several donations of valuable property in addition to that on which St. Joseph's now stands. His generosity was usually prompted by a birth, a death in the family, or a stroke of good fortune in a land deal."²⁰

Suñol's interest in the *Pueblo's* church continued beyond his construction of the building. In 1842 he wrote to Francisco Garcia Diego y Moreño, the Bishop of California, requesting that vestments and other objects of worship

as well as a resident priest be supplied for the church. The Bishop replied:²²

On being informed of your request and those from the others in that pueblo, dated November 17, I am overjoyed at the pious sentiments which moved you to desire a church in that town, along with a resident priest to celebrate the Holy Mysteries, to administer the Sacraments and to assure, by his teaching and example, the maintenance and increase of piety among the residents of that portion of this beloved diocese.,

Though it is a pleasure to see such worthy sentiments, my anxieties, on the other hand, are increased due to the great shortage of priests throughout the jurisdiction. This becomes more evident daily, as the spiritual needs of my children multiply to such an extent that even in areas more populated and needy than your own, I have no one available to send. In certain cases, there is not even a priest to whom the faithful can turn at the hour of death.

In this sad state of affairs, I must ask you and the others of that pueblo to continue as you have in the past, that is, with the occasional ministrations of the priest at Santa Clara. This will be necessary until someone becomes available who can live among you and attend more immediately to your spiritual needs.

As for the new church there, I extend my most cordial gratitude for your efforts exerted for its erection and for the zeal with which you have brought about its completion. As soon as possible, it will be solemnly blessed. Beforehand, I must, according to church law, receive some reports. Just today I commissioned Father Jesus Maria Vasquez del Mercado to make an investigation. If all is satisfactory, there is every reason to believe that the Holy Mysteries will be celebrated there shortly.

*Santa Barbara
December 1, 1842*

Antonio Suñol was well known at Mission Santa Clara. When the fourth church building and surrounding structures were erected starting in 1825 at Santa Clara, Suñol graciously donated several olive trees that he had imported from Mexico.²³ The trees were planted near the porch of the Indian women's

quarters in the Mission quadrangle. Today, only a single adobe wall remains of the building, but five of Suñol's trees still flourish and bear fruit at the "Old Adobe Wall" of the University of Santa Clara campus.

In later years Suñol's involvement with the church would continue, as will be further explained in Chapters 9 and 10.

The decade of the 1820's also saw, in addition to the rise of Suñol's fortunes, the beginnings of a political career that would eventually make Antonio Suñol the most powerful man in the *Pueblo*. That career had begun simply enough with Suñol's appointment as Postmaster of San José in 1826.²⁴ Suñol was the first to serve in that capacity and continued to do so until 1829.

At the beginnings of the new decade, Suñol was appointed *Sindico* or attorney and registrar for San José. Throughout the surviving archives of the *Pueblo* are the budgets and statements prepared by Suñol. Always a businessman, Suñol disbursed to himself \$1.40 for "making out this statement."²⁵

Within twelve years of his arrival in California, Antonio Suñol had increased his lot in life through careful and shrewd business transactions and a commitment to his community. A respected figure in San José, Suñol would continue to occupy a powerful role in the destiny of the *Pueblo* until his death.

CHAPTER 2: *Businessman*

FOOTNOTES:

- ¹"Suñol's Adobe Ruin" newsclipping.
- ²Butler, Phyllis F.; The Valley of Santa Clara. (San Jose: The Junior League of San Jose, 1975.) Page 135.
- ³Bancroft; History of California, 2:605.
- ⁴Spanish-Mexican Archives of the *Pueblo de San José Guadalupe*. Manuscript Collection, San Jose Historical Museum. Statement of 1841; January 2, 1842.
- ⁵Archives of San José, Statement of 1846; January 3, 1847.
- ⁶As Quoted in Brown, Alan K.; Sawpits in the Spanish Redwoods 1787-1849. (San Mateo: San Mateo County Historical Association, 1966) Page 13.
- ⁷Robinson, Alfred; "Journal On The Coast of California..." as cited in Adele Ogden; "Alfred Robinson, New England Merchant in Mexican California." California Historical Society Quarterly (San Francisco: September 1944, Volume 23, Number 3.)
- ⁸Archives, San Jose; March 8, 1829.
- ⁹Nunis, Doyce B., Editor; The California Diary of Faxon Dean Atherton 1836-1839. (San Francisco: California Historical Society, 1964.) Page 79.
- ¹⁰Hall, Frederic; History of San José. (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft and Company, 1877.) Page 397
- ¹¹Suñol, Antonio María; as Quoted in Andres Castellero Vs. the United States (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1860.) 4:413
All future references to this publication will be cited as Castillero.
- ¹²Hall, Page 397.
- ¹³The story of the New Almaden Mines and their development is told in two fine publications; Laurence Bulmore and Milton Lanyon's Cinnabar Hills (Los Gatos: The Village Printers, 1967) and Kenneth M. Johnson's The New Almaden Quicksilver Mine; With An Account of the Land Claims Involving the Mine and It's Role in California History. (Georgetown: Talisman Press, 1963)
The mines are now a Historic Park operated by the County of Santa Clara. There is also a private Museum in the town of New Almaden.

FOOTNOTES (CONTINUED):

- ¹⁴Bancroft, History of California. 4:52
- ¹⁵Bancroft, 4:51
- ¹⁶Castillero; "Deposition of Antonio María Pico." 3:640-641.
- ¹⁷The history of the Santa Teresa grant is ably presented in Benjamin F. Gilbert's Santa Teresa Laboratory: A Place in History (San Jose: International Business Machines Corporation, 1978.) Pages 16 through 21 are concerned with the Bernal family and the Santa Teresa landgrant.
- ¹⁸Solari, Agnes, and Zaro, Margaret; San José's St. Joseph's (San Jose: Mastergraphics, 1975.) Page 5
- ¹⁹Solari and Zaro, page 5.
- ²⁰Solari and Zaro, page 5.
- ²¹Letter; Antonio Suñol to Francisco García Diego y Moreño. San José, November 17, 1842. Archives, University of Santa Clara.
- ²²As Quoted in Francis J. Weber's The Writings of Francisco García Diego y Moreño (Los Angeles: Timothy Cardinal Manning, Archbishop of Los Angeles, 1976) Page 121.
- ²³San Jose Mercury, March 19, 1865.
- ²⁴Bancroft, 2:605.
- ²⁵Archives, San José. Statement of January 2, 1839.

CHAPTER 3: *Ranchero*

A logical move for Antonio Suñol was his decision to acquire a land grant on which he could raise his own cattle for their hides and tallow. The profits would increase greatly if he was selling his own hides to the trade ships. In all probability he was raising a small herd on his father-in-law's *Rancho de Santa Teresa*, as were his brothers-in-law Agustín, Bruno, and Juan Pablo Bernal. All four desired lands of their own, and, together, Agustín Bernal, Juan Pablo Bernal, and their sister Maria de los Dolores, Suñol's wife applied for lands on the former cattle range of Mission San José in 1835.¹

The lands were known as *El Valle de San José* and were still being used by the Mission despite the fact that the Mexican government had confiscated the title years previous. This meant that the lands were public domain and were subject to being granted to private citizens like Suñol and the Bernal brothers. However, the Governor of California, Juan Bautista Alvarado, tabled the petition for the *Valle de San José* on September 10, 1835.²

With the application and petition tabled indefinitely, it appeared that years would pass before any action was taken on the granting of the lands. Antonio Suñol then went ahead on his own and petitioned for other lands near the *agua caliente*, or warm springs near Mission San José. He received title to the lands, which were called the *Rancho Agua Caliente*, on October 13, 1836.³

Suñol never occupied the grant, but sent in his stead a *majordomo*, or overseer, to watch over his cattle herds on the *Rancho Agua Caliente*. He may have hesitated to extensively develop his land while the petition for the other lands was still pending. The lands at *El Valle de San José* were far superior to those at *Água Caliente*, which meant that Suñol would relinquish the latter of the petition for the *Valle* was granted. The petition was renewed in 1837, but with no success.

Finally, on February 22, 1839, Antonio María Pico, in the company of Agustín Bernal, applied once again for the land on behalf of themselves and "the citizens Antonio Suñol...and Juan Bernal." Pico and Bernal had traveled to Monterey to personally plead their case with the Governor, a move that paid off, for the Governor allowed them to move their cattle onto the lands. This was in

anticipation of receiving the final title, which was finally confirmed on April 10, 1839.⁴ The grant was for sixteen square leagues, or about 64,000 acres, and was called the *Rancho El Valle de San José*. When the final confirmation of the new lands had been received, Suñol sold his interest in the *Rancho Agua Caliente* to Fulgencio Higuera of San José for three hundred dollars.⁵ Higuera received his formal title to the grant in 1839. Today, Higuera's *Rancho Agua Caliente* is covered by the Town of Fremont. The surviving adobe residence on the land is from Higuera's period and was not on the *Rancho* when Suñol was there.⁶

Meanwhile, Suñol and his brothers-in-law did not occupy their new grant. Instead, each built a small *palizada* to house their respective *majordomos*.⁷ In time all would reside upon the land with the exception of Suñol, who never lived at the *Rancho El Valle de San José*.⁸

Suñol did, however, visit the *Rancho* each year to supervise the roundup and branding of the cattle, which was followed by the *matanza*, or slaughter of some of the herd for their hides and tallow. Suñol's herds grew to be quite extensive, and one estimate places his holdings on the *Rancho El Valle de San José* at "10,000 cattle, 500 horses and mares and 5,000 sheep."⁹

Suñol's *matanza* of 1845 was described by visiting American James Clyman, who was passing through the *Rancho El Valle de San Jose*. Clyman wrote that he¹⁰

encamped at a Ranche[sic] belonging to a Mixican [sic] Antonio María Suñol who with his Indian slaves were slaughtering cattle for hides and tallow and a more filthy stinking place could not easily be imagined. The carcasses [sic] of 2 or 300 cattle haled [sic] 20 rods from the slaughter ground and left to the vultures wolves and Bears several of the latter were seen feeding or slowly moving off to the mountains at early dawn in the morning. The common price of fat cattle is estimated at eight dollars two dollars for the hide and six dollars for the tallow all in trade cash is not expected and not often demanded.

Suñol's portion of the *Rancho El Valle de San José* was roughly a fourth, and was located in the Sunol Valley. Suñol did not erect an adobe on this land until around the time of Clyman's visit in 1845, when a one-story rectangular

building was erected. This served as the home for Suñol's eldest son José Antonio, who acted as his *majordomo* at that time. The building stood until around 1910, when it was razed.¹¹

Another adobe building was erected around 1850 and has been traditionally been identified as a blacksmith shop.¹² This was located adjacent to the adobe occupied by José Antonio Suñol, and was also razed. There was one other adobe that stood away from the others; it may have served as a storage house for the hides and tallow.

Following the death of José Antonio Suñol in 1855, his younger brother José Narciso moved onto the *Rancho El Valle de San José* and built a small structure that in all probability still stands and is being used as the headquarters for the Sunol Water Temple of the Alameda Division of the San Francisco Water Department.

Suñol's quarter interest in the *Rancho El Valle de San José* was doubled on December 6, 1842, when Antonio María Pico and Maria del Pilar Bernal de Pico transferred their interest to Suñol in consideration of a payment of one hundred and fifty head of cattle.¹³ Suñol realized a great profit when he later sold Pico's interest to his brother-in-law Juan Pablo Bernal. On November 10, 1849, Bernal paid Suñol two thousand dollars for the land.¹⁴ The approximate location of the land in question is today's Town of Livermore.

Suñol and Pico acquired their own lands on June 8, 1846, when Governor Pio Pico deeded to them the lands of ex-Mission San Rafael. Pico was deeding the lands, which totaled some sixty four thousand acres, to pay a state debt of eight thousand dollars.¹⁵ Pico and Suñol later sold their San Rafael holdings to Roderick Morrison, Frank M. Pixley, Henry Sparks Wright, and J. Kelsey on October 13, 1851 for ten thousand dollars.¹⁶ Later, to the chagrin of Morrison, Pixley, Wright and Kelsey, their title to the San Rafael lands was declared invalid. The United States Land Commission ruled that Governor Pico had no authority to sell the Mission lands to Suñol and Pico, a decision which fortunately did not affect either man.

The late 1830's and the early 1840's saw Antonio Suñol's emergence as a *Ranchero* with extensive holdings. His vast lands stretched far and wide over the valleys of the bay area. Yet Suñol feared for his cattle, for increasing

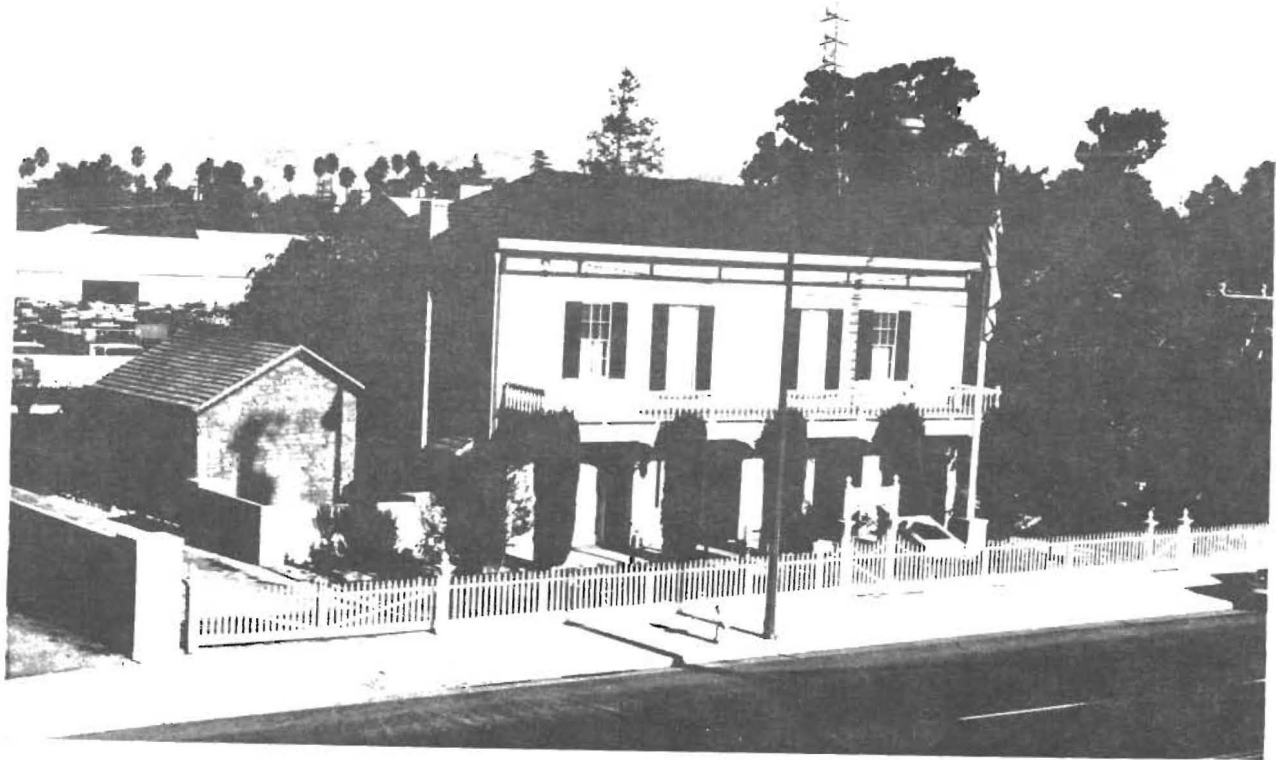
depredations of Indian livestock thieves were threatening all remote *Ranchos*, including Suñol's own portion of the *Rancho El Valle de San José*. Realizing the vulnerability of his herds, Suñol began to seek lands near the *Pueblo de San José* where he could personally oversee his cattle.

The land that he found was located no more than a few miles west of San José. Part of the former pasture lands of Mission Santa Clara, the land had been occupied since 1836 and perhaps earlier by Roberto Balermينو, a former Indian of the Mission. Roberto had built a small adobe and was herding both cattle and swine upon his tract, which evidently gave rise to the name of the ranch, which was *de los Cochés*, or "of the pigs." Roberto had applied for legal title in 1842, and on March 12, 1844, he was formally granted the one-half league *Rancho de los Cochés*.¹⁷

Roberto's herds were small and did not use most of his land, and it may have been this fact which first attracted Suñol to them. As to how Suñol gained use of the lands is uncertain, but it would seem that Roberto, through one means or another, managed to become indebted to Suñol. It may have been as simple as Suñol extending Roberto credit at his store. When the debt became large enough, Suñol could press for payment. There exists in the Archives of the *Pueblo de San José* a small receipt signed by Antonio Suñol that acknowledges the payment of 8 pesos for "the account of *senor* Roberto."¹⁸ However, what small amounts of cash Roberto did possess appear to have been inadequate, for Suñol was occupying the land and running his cattle upon it as early as 1844. It was not an unusual practice for the Californios to pay their debts with land; many were "land poor."

Suñol evidently built a small *palizada* for his use on the *Rancho*. He would then visit during the Springtime, when the roundup and *matanza*. The land was wild and basically uninhabited, and Suñol's cattle were left to roam freely through the brush. As late as 1850 this was still very much the case, when American settler William A. Manley visited the *Rancho de los Cochés*:¹⁹

...I came, when within two or three miles of San Jose, to a large extent of willows so thick, and so thickly woven together with wild blackberry vines, wild roses and other thorny plants, that it appeared at first as if I never



THE BALERMINO-SUÑOL-SPLIVALO HOME, 770 LINCOLN AVENUE, SAN JOSE The small one room adobe is Roberto Balermino's--Suñol's three room fired brick home is hidden by the timber facade of Stefano Splivalo's 1870s additions.

CALIFORNIA REGISTERED LANDMARK 898

Courtesy of John Bruzzone, The Pied Piper, Inc. San Jose, California

could get through. But I found a winding trail made by the cattle through the bushes and mustard, and this I followed, being nearly scared occasionally by some wild steers as they rushed off through the thickets. I got through safely, though it would have been difficult to escape a wild, enraged steer, or a grizzly had I met him face to face even with a rifle in hand. I could see nowhere but by looking straight up, for the willows were in places fifty feet high and a foot in diameter.

Sometime in early 1846 Suñol began construction of a permanent building on the *Rancho de los Cochinos*. Built directly adjacent to Roberto's one-room adobe structure, a wide wooden porch connected the front doors of both structures. Where Roberto's building was constructed of sun-dried adobe, or mud bricks, Suñol's building was constructed of fired brick. According to a 1978 analysis of the Suñol brick,²⁰

It is not a sun-dried brick (adobe) but a kiln fired brick. Coarse sand, fine gravel and clay are the components with very little organic matter.

The bricks appear to be what is called "field-fired" rather than kiln-fired, as they are soft and are not baked throughout. The field-firing method would involve baking the bricks over an open flame, as opposed to an enclosed kiln. This would strongly indicate that the bricks were made on the site of local clay, perhaps from the banks of the nearby *Arroyo de los Gatos*.

The walls were rough and uneven, and today the appearance is of jumbled and irregular courses of brick. This indicates that Suñol's masons were unskilled; they were probably some of his Indian servants. The bricks were cemented together with²¹

mortar...made of clean fine sand with a strong evidence of lime for cementing action, although some of the lime was not well mixed with the sand and was present in pockets.

The completed walls were probably covered with a coat of lime plaster. Suñol's use of fired brick is unusual. Previously, the only use of fired brick in California was "...in the construction of the massive pillars supporting roof

and arcade and in strengthening door and window openings" in the California Missions.²² Fired roof and floor tiles were also used in some more elaborate private residences. There are no known structures in California prior to Suñol's that were made totally of fired brick. The generally accepted "first brick building" in California is Monterey's Dickenson House, which²³

...was built in 1847 by Gallant Duncan Dickenson...the actual work was done by a son-in-law of Dickinson's, A.G. Lawrie, a brick mason. Lawrie molded and fired the bricks on the building site. The original house contained six rooms, three on the lower floor and three on the upper floor. The house was never entirely completed. The "Gold Rush" diverted the plan's of it's builder, who never returned to complete it.

The first brick building most certainly is not Dickenson's house. Dickinson's house was started in 1847 and was not finished by early 1848, when the "Gold Rush" began. Testimony in the landgrant case for the *Rancho de los Coches* indicates that Suñol had completed his brick building by 1847, which, if such a building took about a year to build, would indicate that construction had commenced in 1846. If there is any building that can be unequivocally identified as the "first brick building" in California, Antonio Suñol's has about the best claim for that "honor."

When the walls were completed Suñol covered his home with a redwood shingle roof he apparently had purchased from his lumberjack friends in the mountains. He also installed a redwood plank floor, the heavy boards measuring in at two feet wide and two inches thick. Suñol apparently added a redwood roof to Roberto's adobe, which most probably was previously roofed with thatch. Suñol also appears to have remodeled the adobe at one time to serve as a detached kitchen. A portion of the east wall was removed and the aperature was partially sealed with fired bricks. This may have served as a flue for a small *hornito*, or oven. It was a common practice to have a detached kitchen.

Several details in the construction of the home reveal that Suñol was not ignorant of engineering and architecture. In fact, Suñol anticipated building practices which only recently have come into wide-spread use. One of these was

a type of "floating" foundation. The brick walls extend some three feet below the surface, where they flange out, creating a sort of "pad" on which the walls rest. (See Illustration) This allows the walls to "float" during an earthquake, much like a ship rides out stormy waters on an even keel. This anticipated the development of the "floating" foundations which are today mandatory in California.

Suñol also laid his floor over a two foot layer of gravel. The gravel allowed the floor to rest on a dry, easily drained surface rather than hard-packed earth. This feature allowed Suñol clean, dry floors that were protected from rot and termite damage. Today, some one hundred and thirty odd years after they were laid, Suñol's redwood floors are in pristine condition. Both the "floating" foundation and a gravel bed were unknown building practices in California at the time Suñol built his brick building on the *Rancho de los Coches*.

Even with his tremendous expenditure of time and money on the brick home, he only occupied it during his annual springtime visit to the *Rancho*. During the rest of the year he probably allowed Roberto and his family to occupy it. Roberto relinquished his title to Suñol on January 1, 1847.²⁴ In the formal deed to the property, Roberto stated he was deeding his *Rancho* to Suñol because "I am in debt to him for \$500, and have no means to acquit myself of this debt."²⁵ To his credit Suñol allowed Roberto and his family to live out the rest of their lives on their former lands. Roberto died in either late 1847 or early 1848, his wife followed him in death soon after Roberto's demise.²⁶ In 1851, the only Balermينو left living was Roberto's only son Juan, who relinquished any claim he may have had for the *Rancho de los Coches*²⁷

...because of the support and protection and many acts of kindness which the said Suñol has bestowed upon my parents from a period long anterior to the aforesaid conveyance until their death and has continued to my sister and myself.

Juan Balermينو and his sister both died in 1851, leaving Antonio Suñol the sole and undisputed owner of the *Rancho de los Coches*. The *Rancho de los Coches*, the quarter interest in the *Rancho El Valle de San José*, and his half of the Mission San Rafael lands easily made Suñol one of the wealthiest and prominent *Rancheros* in the San Francisco Bay area by early 1846.

CHAPTER 3: *Ranchero*

FOOTNOTES:

- ¹Hagemann, Herbert L.; "Abstract of Title; Rancho El Valle de San José." The Pacific Historian (May 1965) Page 1.
- ²Hagemann, Page 1
- ³Munro-Fraser, J.P.; History of Alameda County, California. (Oakland: M.W. Wood, 1883.) Page 333
- ⁴Hagemann, Page 5
- ⁵National Society of Colonial Dames; Early Mexican Ranchos in the San Francisco Bay Area (No publisher, No date.) Page 17
- ⁶The adobe structure on the *Rancho Agua Caliente* apparently dates to around 1840 and is traditionally known as the Higuera-Galindo Adobe. The adobe may have been built by Fulgencio Higuera, but details are lacking. For many years the adobe stood in ruins until 1978, when the adobe, which had recently been acquired by the City of Fremont, was restored by Architect Gilbert A. Sanchez of San Jose. Sanchez had previously restored San Jose's Peralta Adobe and the Roberto Adobe and Antonio Suñol's brick house on the *Rancho de los Cochés*. See the San Jose Mercury-News of Saturday, October 21, 1978.
- ⁷Bowman, J.N. and Hendry, G.; "Spanish-Mexican Adobes in the Nine Bay Area Counties" (Manuscript on file at the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. 1940) "Rancho El Valle de San José." (Alameda County). Hereafter referred to as Bowman-Hendry Manuscript.
- ⁸Stuart, Reginald and Stuart, Grace; Corridor Country (Pleasanton: Amador-Livermore Valley Historical Society, 1966.) Page 67
- ⁹Davis, William Heath; Seventy-Five Years in California (San Francisco: John Howell, 1967) Page 286
- ¹⁰Clyman, James; "Diaries and Reminiscences." California Historical Society Quarterly (San Francisco: California Historical Society, June, 1926)
- ¹¹Bowman-Hendry Manuscript.
- ¹²Bowman-Hendry Manuscript.
- ¹³Hagemann; Abstract of Title..., Page 10.

FOOTNOTES (CONTINUED):

¹⁴Hagemann, Page 10

¹⁵Bowman, Jacob N.; "Spanish-Mexican Landgrants of California." (Manuscript in the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley) #390 "Ex-Mission San Rafael."

¹⁶Book of Deeds, "A" Marin County Recorder's Office. Page 412

¹⁷Fox, Frances L.; From Landgrant to Landmark. (San Jose: Pied Piper Publishing, 1978.) Page 15

¹⁸Archives, San Jose; August 12, 1843.

¹⁹Manley, William A.; Death Valley in '49. (San Jose: The Pacific Tree and Vine Company, 1894.) Page 389

²⁰Fox, Page 31

²¹Fox, Page 31

²²Kirker, Harold; California's Architectural Frontier. (Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1973) Page 6

²³Unidentified Newsclipping; "The First Brick House" April 25, 1970.
Frances L. Fox Collection.

²⁴Fox, Page 25

²⁵Fox, Page 23

²⁶Fox, Page 23

²⁷Fox, Page 23

CHAPTER 4: Captain Sutter and His Fort

In 1839, Antonio Suñol received an interesting visitor at his home in San José. That visitor was a Swiss named Johann Augustus Sutter, sometimes called John A. Sutter. Sutter had arrived in California on July 2, 1839, with the intent to settle permanently.¹ Sutter's plan was to locate in the hitherto unsettled Sacramento Valley and establish an outpost there. The Mexican government of California backed Sutter's plan. Sutter had been sent to Suñol by a government official who thought that Suñol might be able to extend the Swiss some credit with which to start his settlement.

The two men apparently took a great liking to each other. Sutter, who also spoke fluent French, espoused in that language his great love and admiration for the people and culture of France; Suñol evidently responded with a generous extension of credit to his fellow Francophile. The relationship between the two men was to last for nearly a decade, and during that time both corresponded in French. A collection of their correspondence, which comprises the "Sutter-Suñol Correspondence" in the California State Library.

After selecting a site for his settlement on the banks of the Sacramento River (and within the boundaries of today's City of Sacramento), Sutter began construction of an adobe fortress to protect his settlement from the Indians of the area. This was done in late 1839. At that time Sutter's primary creditor was Ignacio Martinez of the *contra costa*, who supplied him with beef cattle. Suñol supplied Sutter with grain.² Unfortunately for Sutter, he fell out of grace with Martinez almost immediately when he could not satisfy Martinez's demands for prompt payment. This enraged Martinez, who responded by cutting off Sutter's credit in early 1840.

Sutter then turned to Antonio Suñol for more credit. The first major extension of credit was in the fall of 1840, when Sutter recorded that "I bought one thousand head of cattle from Don Antonio Suñol and many more of Don Joaquin Gomez and others."³ This was the simple start of a massive debt Sutter would accumulate with Suñol.

As work progressed on his fort, Sutter came to rely even more upon Suñol, turning frequently to him for more credit. Suñol apparently did not mind

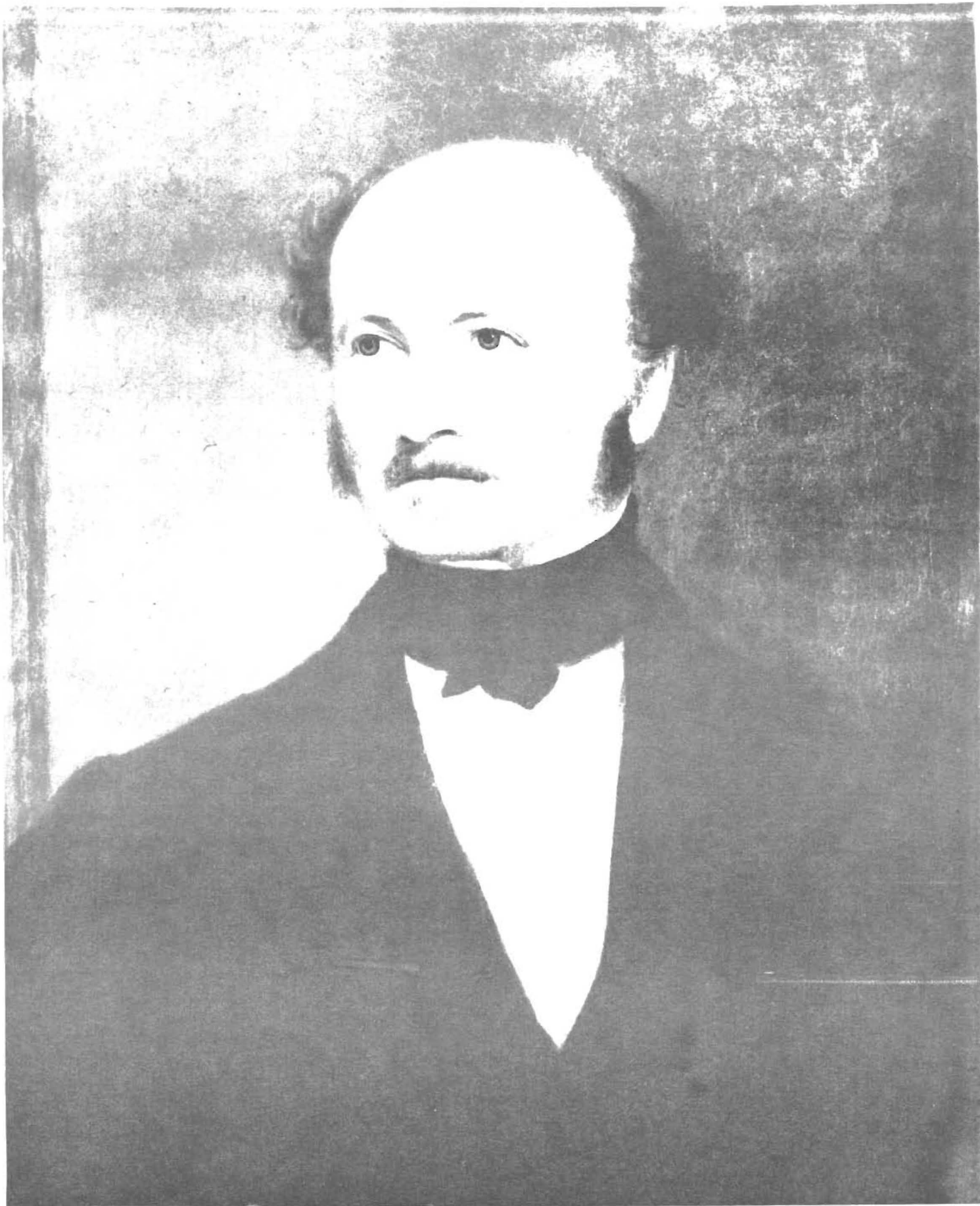
Sutter's demands: "Sutter's creditors--Suñol and Martinez chiefly--were not impatient during that first season; or even the next. Don Antonio dispatched corn, beans, peas, geese and turkeys whenever the Swiss ordered them. It was an admirable arrangement--at least for Sutter."⁴

Sutter had difficulty in obtaining credit through other sources due to his sometimes arrogant and insulting manner. He had alienated both Ygnacio Martinez and the powerful General Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo by early 1841. Only Suñol ignored Sutter's intolerably bad manners and continued to grant him credit. This may have been because "Sutter was much more polite with him than Martinez because of their mutual love of France."⁵ There was also the fact that both Sutter and Suñol considered themselves gentleman of the same breed, a bond that would take great difficulty to be broken. It was perhaps due to his sense of honor as a gentleman helping another gentleman that Suñol sent Sutter all he requested, which included "seed wheat and peas to sow, plus corn, beans and white Columbia wheat with which to feed his men."⁶

Suñol also extended supplies to enable Sutter to finish his fort. When Sutter needed lumber, Suñol sent him six thousand feet of redwood.⁷ In the winter of 1841, when the imminent winter rains threatened Sutter's unprotected adobe walls, Suñol sent him shingle nails.⁸

When the time came to outfit and stock his finished fort, Sutter turned once again to Suñol. Suñol dispatched "raw sugar, dried meat, cocoa, cheese and onion seeds" along with other foodstuffs.⁹ When Sutter wanted to begin distilling liquor at the fort, Suñol sent him the equipment to build a crude still, perhaps very similiar to the one Suñol used to manufacture the liquor he sold in San José. Sutter, however, did not succeed in making a good product, for when Suñol requested some of the Sutter liquor to sell, Sutter wrote him that it was unfit for consumption!¹⁰

The first schism in the relationship seems to have come, inevitably, when Suñol advanced his first claims for payment in late 1841-early 1842. He had extended an enormous amount of credit to Sutter, who, in spite of his mutual like of Suñol, was "no less eager for supplies...and no less reluctant to



JOHANN AUGUSTUS "JOHN" SUTTER

Society of California Pioneers, San Francisco, California

pay for them promptly."¹¹ Sutter stalled Suñol's requests for payment. "Sutter was confident he could pay off Suñol from his agricultural returns or from his latest venture--fur trapping."¹² Both, unfortunately for Sutter, did not pay well, and Sutter was forced to admit to Suñol that he could not pay him because "three months of trapping had paid little or nothing."¹³ Suñol received his first payment in mid-1842, when Sutter finally sent him some beaver pelts. That year Sutter sent on "ninety seven pelts, at \$2.50 a pound, to Sunol" in April and "forty-seven skins, weighing seventy-seven and a half pounds in May."¹⁴ Sutter even tried to out-fox Suñol when in 1843 he sent along some sixty-seven skins, which he claimed weighed eighty pounds. The shrewd Suñol wrote his friend that¹⁵

I received the 67 beaver hides, which hides you say weighed 80 pounds. I sent them straight to the boat of Mr. Melar, and he tells me that they only weighed 75 pounds. I tell you this only for your records.

Another means by which Sutter attempted to pay off his debt involved his sending Indian servants for Suñol to use in San Jose. Some of these Indians may have helped Suñol build the *Pueblo* church; still others may have aided him in the construction of his brick building on the *Rancho de Los Cochés*. Sutter apparently was "not above involving himself in the dirty business of slaving Indians..."¹⁶ Sutter was so over-extended on his credit that¹⁷

when he sent a group [of Indians] to Suñol to work off part of his debt, he swallowed his pride and apologized for the fact that some did not even have shirts to wear...when the Indians passed Marsh's ranch, enroute to Suñol's, the miser grumblingly killed two calves to feed them after billing Suñol for \$ 6.

In early 1845 Sutter embarked upon a series of military campaigns against the Indian livestock thieves in the San Joaquin Valley who had been plundering the herds of many *Ranchos*, including Suñol's *Rancho El Valle de San José*. On

May 19, he promised Suñol "I shall send you some young Indians after our campaign against the horse thieves."¹⁸ For once Sutter was good to his word and sent Suñol the Indians on June 14. He begged Suñol to keep the Indians away from the Indians of San José, who had reaped the dubious benefits of civilization. Sutter did not want his Indians to develop any vices or diseases that were rampant among many of the San José Indians. Once Suñol was through with them, he was to return them to Sutter at *Nueva Helvetia*, which was Sutter's name for his domain.¹⁹

Throughout most of their acquaintance, Sutter was not as prompt with his payment as he had been with the Indian servants. Most of the time payment was simply not made, and²⁰

...for the endless delays in delivery...to Suñol he had a whole catalog of excuses: the hunting parties were late; he had loaned his schooner to the Hudson's Bay Company; his launch had broken down.

Payment for the most part was piecemeal. Sutter placated Suñol by sending him notice that carpenter "Peter Lassen, who was under Sutter's patronage, was engaged in manufacturing some house furniture which had been ordered by Suñol."²¹ Sutter also sent Suñol hats from the *Nueva Helvetia* hattery and bridles from the leather shops for Suñol to sell in his store.²²

Where this method of payment may have placated Suñol, it did not placate his brothers-in-law Juan Pablo and Agustin Bernal, who sold cattle to Sutter through Suñol. The Bernals began to pressure Suñol about payment from Sutter, and Suñol in turn pressured the Swiss, who hedged and stalled. The Bernals then made plans to accompany Suñol to *Nueva Helvetia* and seize their cattle, a plan which horrified Sutter.²³ He promised payment by October of 1844. The friendship between Sutter and Suñol was definitely coming to end, a fact Sutter realized when he wrote Suñol that "I can see that the business transaction between us is becoming more and more disagreeable to you. I am sorry, but what can I do?"²⁴ Sutter continued to stall the Bernals and Suñol until 1846.

By 1846 Sutter was so firmly entrenched in debt that he could not meet his obligation to finally pay the Bernals. He asked British Vice-Consul

James Alexander Forbes of Santa Clara to ask the Bernal's to wait just a little longer for their cattle. When the Bernal's demanded immediate payment, Sutter was forced to borrow the cattle from Robert Livermore of the *Rancho Las Positas* in order to pay the debt.²⁵

Suñol, meanwhile, had not been able to collect his own debt. In November of 1845 he journeyed to *Nueva Helvetia* with his son-in-law Pierre Sainsevain to personally present a claim for payment. The daily log kept at *Nueva Helvetia* by Sutter recorded their arrival on board "the schooner *Sacramento*; passengers Sears, Foster, & Dⁿ Ant^o Suñol and his son in law--also the Indians who were at work for Suñol...launch was freighted with dried meat..."²⁶ The dried meat was apparently part of Sutter's payment to Suñol. Satisfied for the time being, Suñol and Sainsevain left *Nueva Helvetia* after a stay of three days.

When the troops of the United States occupied Sutter's Fort during the Mexican War of 1846, Sutter was ecstatic when a laconic offer to purchase his establishment was made. "Sutter used the negotiations, most of which existed only in his mind, to put off creditors like Suñol..."it is probable the government will buy my fort...everything will be settled and I shall not delay paying."²⁷ Like so many other Sutter promises, this one never became reality, and Suñol was once again reduced to waiting and pressuring for payment.

The California "gold rush" of 1848 finally saw Suñol collect most of his debt from Sutter. Sutter and his Indian servants mined great quantities of gold, and as the money flowed into *Nueva Helvetia's* previously empty coffers an anxious line of creditors appeared at Sutter's door. Sutter was forced to part with his new riches as the "claims advanced by Antonio Suñol, Martinez, Messrs. Starkey, Tannion and Co. and others were paid in yellow flakes."²⁸ When his gold ran out Sutter was forced to sell off his vast tracts of land to meet his obligations. With the help of his son John Augustus Sutter, Jr. and recently arrived Kentucky lawyer Peter H. Burnett, Sutter began selling lots for a proposed "Sacramento City." Ironically enough, "Sacramento City" became today's City of Sacramento, the capital of the State of California, of which Peter H. Burnett was the first governor.

As more money became available through the sale of the Sacramento City lots, Sutter paid off his debts. More bills were presented to him, "Antonio Suñol had a bill for \$3,000 and countless other creditors swarmed after him."²⁹ When the sales of the lots seemed to falter, and it appeared that Sutter could not pay his debts, Burnett advanced him "the \$10,000 he needed to wipe out his last American debt, to Suñol."³⁰

A final ironic note is that Suñol was one of the first to extend Sutter credit and was among the last to be paid. The friendship the two men had felt was gone; 1849 marks the last letter in the vast correspondence between Sutter and Suñol. Sutter would settle into ignominious poverty and would die in Washington, D.C. in 1880 after learning that the Congress had adjourned without granting him compensation for lands of his that had been seized by squatters during the "gold rush."

CHAPTER 4: *Captain Sutter and His Fort*

FOOTNOTES:

- ¹Bancroft, Hubert Howe; History of California, 4:122
- ²Gudde, Erwin G.; Sutter's Own Story. (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1936) Page 50.
- ³As quoted in Thor Severson; Sacramento, An Illustrated History, 1839 to 1874. (San Francisco: California Historical Society, 1973) Page 43.
- ⁴Dana, Julian; Sutter of California. (New York: Halcyon Pressm 1934) Page 90.
- ⁵Dillon, Richard H.; Fool's Gold: A Biography of John Sutter. (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1967) Page 107.
- ⁶Ibid.
- ⁷Ibid.
- ⁸Dillon, Page 119.
- ⁹Dillon, Page 108.
- ¹⁰Sutter to Suñol, June 13, 1843. Original Manuscript in the California State Library, Sacramento. Cited as Sutter-Suñol Correspondence.
- ¹¹Dillon, Page 107.
- ¹²Ibid.
- ¹³Sutter-Suñol, January 9, 1841 and Dillon, Page 129.
- ¹⁴Sutter-Suñol, March 24, 1842 and May 1, 1842.
- ¹⁵Suñol to Sutter, April 11, 1843.
- ¹⁶Dillon, Page 129.

¹⁷Dillon, Page 143.

¹⁸Sutter-Suñol, May 19, 1845.

¹⁹Ibid., June 14, 1845.

²⁰Dillon, Page 135.

²¹Dana, Page 155

²²Ibid.

²³Sutter-Suñol, October 16, 1843.

²⁴Sutter-Suñol, November 9, 1844.

²⁵Zollinger, Peter; Sutter: The Man and His Empire. (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1967) Page 107.

²⁶Gudde, Erwin G., Editor; New Helvetia Diary: A Record of Events Kept by John A. Sutter and His Clerks at New Helvetia, California, From September 9, 1840 to April 25, 1848. (San Francisco: The Grabhorn Press, 1939) Page 11.

²⁷Sutter-Suñol, November 12, 1846.

²⁸Dana, Page 339.

²⁹Zollinger, Page 275.

³⁰Dillon, Page 311.

CHAPTER 5: "A man of note and influence"

By 1840 Suñol, who could now claim the title of respect, *Don*, had raised himself to the top of San José's social ladder. His integrity, polished manners, business acumen and wealth had put him in the good graces of the *gente de razon*, or the "people of reason" as the aristocrats favored to style themselves. These families prided themselves on pure Spanish blood and disdained social contact with the "masses." While the majority of the *Pueblo* would enjoy large public *fiesta*, "small home dances were given among exclusive circles, usually at the homes of Don Antonio Suñol, Don Antonio María Pico, Senor Noriega and Senor Bernal."¹

According to an account by Suñol's granddaughter,²

...my grandfather, Don Antonio Suñol, and his home, are a fair picture of the chivalrous host and the warm-hearted hospitality of the times. The guest chamber was seldom untenanted, and seven or eight guests together were welcomed and entertained for two or three successive weeks... the host and his family devoted themselves to the entertainment of their guests and a series of festivities was gotten up in their honor. The homes of Don Salvis Pacheco, Don Dolores Pacheco, Don Jose Noriega, and Don Antonio Suñol were the scenes of many of these festivities.

She also recalled visits to the Suñol household by Don Antonio's contacts with the trade ships³

English, Russian and American trading vessels made periodic visits to San Francisco and the merchandise was brought to San José on pack horses. When time permitted, the supercargo, captain and some of his officers, would accompany the caravan, and for weeks were royally entertained.

According to his granddaughter, it was Suñol's habit, despite his aristocratic leanings, to invite all of the *Pueblo* to a grand *fiesta* by sending out⁴

...some gay cavalier, who possessed a melodious voice and could thrum the light guitar, attired in a gay holiday costume, with clinking silver spurs and mounted upon a spirited horse, pranced

and curvetted through the plaza singing some ditty, and when he had arrested the attention of the passerby addressed them in friendly, courteous language, extending the invitation to all present, rich and poor, not low and high for each man was as good as his neighbor, and wealth did not place a man upon a pedestal of honor. When pleasantries had been exchanged between the messenger and the crowd, he passed on and stopping at the door of each house, repeated his invitation, thus honoring all with a daylight serenade.

Despite the hint of romanticism, there is a certain amount of truth in what Suñol's granddaughter writes. However, Suñol was not of the opinion that "every man was as good as his neighbor, and wealth did not place a man upon a pedestal of honor." According to Suñol's godson James Alonzo Forbes (the son of James Alexander Forbes):⁵

Mr. Suñol was very exclusive and had very aristocratic ideals. It was a common saying in San José that nothing less than a patent of French nobility would come up to the standard set up by old man Suñol for his intimates.

Years after his departure from Spain, Suñol still reflected the *afrancesado* sentiments of his parents. Suñol was a devout francophile, and allegedly flew the flags of Spain, Mexico, and France over his home. This somewhat apparent francophilia was noted by visiting French diplomat Eugene Duflot de Mofras in 1841. Msr. du Mofras, who was ostensibly on a travel for pleasure, but instead was secretly gathering information should France attempt to take California. Msr. du Mofras was interested in listing French sympathizers; it is no surprise he paid a visit to Antonio Suñol. According to his account, Suñol "has served in the French army and is dedicated to the French people."⁶ Du Mofras also noted that⁷

M. Suñol speaks French fluently and seems friendly towards France. Since he owns two ranchos and considerable livestock, and has charge of a business that assures him high standing in the community, his assistance



1875 Admiral Charles Wilkes, U.S.N.

CHARLES WILKES, U.S.N.

Society of California Pioneers, San Francisco, California

would be invaluable to French vessels
arriving at Monterey or San Francisco.

Just around the same time he was visited by du Mofras, Suñol was also the host to Lieutenant Charles Wilkes, the commander of a United States Exploring Expedition. Unfortunately for Sunol, he did not make as favorable an impression on Lieutenant Wilkes as he did on du Mofras. According to Wilkes,⁸

...Don Miguel had represented to me, that his standing would be very much affected if we did not proceed at once to the Alcalde's. We accordingly rode up to his house, a very pretty two storied edifice, of a light cream colour, in the centre of the main street, and directly opposite a new church that they are erecting. The Alcalde gave us a cordial reception. His first appearance was that of a French pastry-cook, with his white cap and apron. He was a⁹ short, dapper rosy cheeked man, by birth a Frenchman, but had been now twenty years settled in the Pueblo; was married, and had eleven children, who looked as healthy and dirty as one would wish to see them. The moment he understood who his visitors were, he did us the honour to doff his white cap and apron, and shortly after appeared in a round-about, very much ornamented with braid, etc. ¹⁰The only name I heard him called by was Don Pedro. He spoke his native language imperfectly, using a great many Spanish words with it, and told me that he had nearly forgotten it. ¹¹From him I learned that the Pueblo contained six hundred inhabitants, about forty of whom were whites. ¹²He described himself as the "sous-prefect" and said that he administered justice, inflicted punishment, and had the ability to make the inhabitants happy, as he thought they should be. On my asking by what laws he administered justice, his answer was, by what he thought right. He had very little trouble, except guarding against the attacks of Indians and preventing them from stealing horses, of which he had great fears; he had, therefore, provided for the safety of his own by keeping them in a small shed attached to his house, and within a locked gate.

He considered the Pueblo as in danger from attacks by the Indians, who were now in great numbers within striking distance, and had become very troublesome as of late in driving off horses, of which they had lost three or four hundred, and he said that pursuit was impossible, as they now had no troops. I was not satisfied

that the Alcalde was the bravest man in the world, or that he thought much of the interests of those whom he had sway. Don Miguel gave him the character of being a good customer, and generally punctual in his payments. He entertained us with wine and beer of his own making, and showed us the copy books of his children, who were in pot-hooks and trammels, which he looked upon as a wonderful advancement in the education of the country. Some half-dozen books were all they owned in the Pueblo; but to make up for the deficiency, the Alcalde told me that they were all happy, and that there were but few quarrels, for those which stabs were inflicted did not occur oftener than once a fortnight.

Despite Lieutenant Wilkes' sometimes sarcastic tone and biased viewpoint, he recorded some interesting observations of Antonio Suñol. Suñol apparently considered himself, perhaps as a member of the *gente de razon*, supreme authority in the Pueblo, which was not quite untrue considering his political post, about which more will be said later. Also evident is Don Antonio's concern about education. Proud of his own education, and not ignorant of its' beneficial influence in his own success, he was taking active steps to educate his children. He would later send his sons to France to be schooled at the *Lycee de Bordeaux*, which may have been his own *alma mater*.¹³

As to Suñol's fears of the Indian horse thieves, that fear was justified. When Spanish rule had ceased in California, the system of *Presidios* and the military protection they brought deteriorated. More often than not the residents were forced to rely upon their own resources to protect their stock. Some, like Suñol, moved their stock closer to home. Still others made punitive raids upon the Indians. Most of the Indians were from native groups that had not been subjugated under Spanish rule, primarily the peoples of the San Joaquin Valley. They were joined by disgruntled Indians from the Missions, and together they continually raided the *Ranchos*.¹⁴ The problem reached epidemic proportions by 1840. As the government had no troops to send or any funds with which to equip a volunteer militia, what organized raids made against the Indians that were done were done with private capital. Antonio Suñol personally financed such a raid in 1841.¹⁵

The Indians by this time were so bold as to actually come within the town limits and spy out the possibilities for new raids. There were also spies

within the ranks of the Mission Indians. This fact came to light in 1841 when a Mission San José Indian named Zeñon was caught conspiring with a group of other raiders to kidnap and murder several prominent citizens in the San Francisco Bay area. Those marked for death included José Castro of San Juan Bautista, José Estrada, who was the *Prefecto*, or Lieutenant Governor, General Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo of Sonoma, and Antonio María Suñol.¹⁶ For his involvement in the plot, Zeñon was sentenced to four months hard labor. This conspiracy had been uncovered around the time of Wilkes' visit, which may help explain Suñol's fear of the Indians.

When visited by his two distinguished foreign guests, Don Antonio had just assumed the reins of power in San José. When José Estrada had been appointed *Prefecto* by Governor Juan Bautista Alvarado on July 30, 1841, he wrote Suñol that¹⁷

The Senor Secretary of State, of the Government of this Department on the current date of the 7th has written to me what I have copied:

"The Excellency Senor Governor has well approved the appointment you have made, senor, for the office of Sub-Prefect in favor of Don Antonio Suñol, who will immediate execute the duties of his office; making San José the headquarters of the district, and at the same time he will proceed to appoint as Justice of the Peace a property owner or financially responsible person whose holdings are in that district."

I have the honor of informing you...this prefecture... trusts in your inherent honesty and patriotism...In declaring to you the nomination in your favor for the Sub-Prefecture of this province I have the satisfaction to offer you my just appreciation and consideration.

*God and Liberty
Monterey, 9 August 1841*

The Sub-Prefect was an assistant to the Prefect. The Sub-Prefect would be in charge of a certain district. The Prefect would send the instructions and orders emanating from the Governor to the Sub-Prefects, who would then post and enforce those edicts. In a sense, the Sub-Prefects, who "presided over

districts of considerable extent," were the supreme authority in their individual sectors.¹⁸ Their duties were "to preserve public order; to publish and enforce the laws of the general government; to impose fines not exceeding \$100 for offences; to sentence any disturber of the peace; to act as judges of elections of the Alcaldes and ayuntamientos, and to serve as a channel of communication between local governmental agencies and the governor."¹⁹

Suñol became San José's *Alcalde* in 1841 when none was elected. Suñol, as Sub-Prefect, assumed the role and office. While headquartered in San José, Suñol's district encompassed the *Pueblo de Branciforte* as well as San José and all lands to the south of San José and north of San Juan Bautista. Branciforte would later become an independent district.

Within the Archives of the *Pueblo de San José* repose much of Suñol's official correspondence as Sub-Prefect. This collection of letters accurately documents Suñol's service as Sub-Prefect and reveals another facet of this complicated and influential man. A collection of selected correspondence forms Appendix 2 of this work.

As Sub-Prefect, Suñol had the power to make judicial appointments and oversee the work of the local officials. Sometimes that involved a mild reprimand for duties neglected; still other times Suñol was forced to take stronger action, as this letter illustrates:²⁰

THE SUBPREFECTURE OF THE FIRST DISTRICT

*To the Justice of the Peace,
San José de Guadalupe*

I know that somebody is manufacturing grain alcohol in the mountains, and you know it is prohibited to make it without a license. I have warned you various times about this nuisance but you have paid no attention. I have personally asked them if they had a license from your court, and they said that they had none but that they would get one. I warn you that if anything bad results from this in the future, I shall hold you responsible for the outcome.

God and Liberty;

*Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe
18 of November, 1842*

ANTONIO SUÑOL.

Suñol was to receive pay for his services as Sub-Prefect; this money usually never arrived. The Archives note that Suñol was paid nineteen dollars and four reales in 1843 for " a debt which the municipality contracted in the year 1842" which apparently was for supplies Suñol had furnished through his store,²¹ but there is no record of payment of a salary to Suñol. In a report to his government in 1846, United States Consul Thomas Oliver Larkin noted that Suñol was owed "four hundred and sixty-two dollars and fifty cents" by the government, no doubt his salary as Sub-Prefect.²² Suñol's portion of the eight thousand dollars owed to he and Pico may have also been back wages owed to him by the government. If so, then the debt was paid when he and Pico received the title to the lands of Mission San Rafael as related in Chapter 3.

Suñol served as Sub-Prefect for four years, his legal term of office. He attempted to resign in 1843 due to illness but was begged to continue on as Sub-Prefect.²³ He had evidently been in poor health for some time; illness had compelled him to take a leave of absence in 1842.²⁴ His last year in office was 1844, and his last official act was to preside over the selection of new municipal officials in early 1845.

Suñol's term was marked by repeated problems with the Indians and the influx of foreign settlers. Perhaps his most famous act as Sub-Prefect was to arrest the members of the Bartelson-Bidwell Party of 1841, the first group of overland pioneers to reach California, for not possessing passports. He later released them when General Mariano Vallejo issued them passports.²⁵ Suñol firmly believed in the law, it seems, and upheld it to a strict extreme. He was, however, honest and friendly, which seems to have made him popular with his superiors in Monterey. Suñol was a fine Sub-Prefect who set a good example as San José's first for his successors to follow.

As a *Don* and government official Antonio Suñol was perhaps the most powerful and influential man in San José at this time; his reputation and position brought influential men to his door, making Suñol a first hand witness to the events that shaped California's destiny, a destiny he helped mold as a man of note and influence.

CHAPTER 5: "a man of note and influence"

FOOTNOTES:

- ¹Hunt, Rockwell D.; California and Californians. (San Francisco: Lewis Putnam Company, 1926.) Page 467
- ²Carroll, Mary Bowden; Ten Years in Paradise. (San Jose: Popp and Hogan, 1903) Pages 14-15.
- ³Carroll, Page 14.
- ⁴Carroll, Page 14.
- ⁵Letter, James Alonzo Forbes to his niece; December 17, 1906. Saratoga Historical Society Collection.
- ⁶Eugene du Mofras; 1:162
- ⁷du Mofras, 1:219
- ⁸Charles N. Wilkes, U.S.N.; From the Columbia River to the Sacramento. (Oakland: Biobooks, 1958.) Pages 98-99
- ⁹Wilkes is mistaken. Suñol may have told him that he was a Frenchman, or perhaps the Lieutenant misunderstood what Suñol was saying.
- ¹⁰Another mistake, Suñol was always called "Don Antonio."
- ¹¹Suñol may indeed may have forgotten some of his French, or was he pretending to not speak fluent French, as du Mofras reported?
- ¹²The "whites" most certainly were the *Gente de Razon*, of which Suñol was considered a member.
- ¹³Munro-Fraser, J.P.; History of Alameda County, California. (Oakland: M.W. Wood, 1883.) Page 983.
- ¹⁴A rather comprehensive account of this problem is related by Sylvia Broadbent in "Conflict at Monterey: Indian Horse Raiding, 1820-1850." The Journal of California Anthropology. (Riverside: Malki Museum, Spring 1974) Pages 86-101

FOOTNOTES (CONTINUED)

- ¹⁵ James, William F. and McMurry, George H.; History of San José. (San Jose: A.H. Cawston, 1933.) Page 57
- ¹⁶ James and McMurry, Page 57
- ¹⁷ Archives, San José; August 9, 1841
- ¹⁸ Davis, William Heath, Page 62
- ¹⁹ Evans, Luther H., Ed.; Inventory of the County Archives of California, Number 4 Santa Clara County (San Jose). (San Francisco: Historic Records Survey, Works Progress Administration, 1939) Page 296
- ²⁰ Archives, San José; November 18, 1842
- ²¹ Archives, San José; January 1, 1844
- ²² Hammond, George P., Ed.; The Larkin Papers. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953.) 4:139
- ²³ Archives, San José; April 15, 1843
- ²⁴ Archives, San José; April 15, 1843
- ²⁵ McKittrick, Myrtle M.; Vallejo, Son of California. (Portland: Binfords and Mort 1944.) Pages 197-198

CHAPTER 6: *Clouds of War*

Political turmoil marked the new year of 1845. Not more than a month previous, a potentially bloody civil war had been averted in California, partly through the efforts of Antonio Suñol. The government of Mexico had appointed a new Governor, Manuel Micheltoarena, who had replaced Juan Bautista Alvarado. Micheltoarena, for various reasons, had become widely unpopular. To add to his troubles, Micheltoarena was at odds with Alvarado, who plotted, along with military commandant General Jose Castro, to overthrow him. A revolt fomented by Alvarado and Castro soon broke out and gained tremendous popular support for native born Alvarado. In San José, many took Alvarado's side, including Antonio Suñol's brothers-in-law Agustín Bernal, Juan Pablo Bernal, and Antonio María Pico. By late 1844 the rebels were headquartered at the *Rancho Santa Teresa*, with Micheltoarena's opposing forces on the neighboring *Rancho la Laguna Seca*, some three miles south of Santa Teresa.

Fortunately no blood was shed, as a peace treaty was negotiated between the two sides on December 1, 1844. Antonio Suñol was one of the Peace Commissioners who arranged the treaty.¹ Governor Micheltoarena, however, soon broke the truce and within a few weeks of signing the treaty renewed hostilities. Micheltoarena was aided by the opportunistic Sutter, who had been promised lands and money for his loyalty and support to Micheltoarena's cause.

In January of 1845 Sutter and a force of men marched south from *Nueva Helvetia* to join Micheltoarena. Sutter's route took him through San José, as he later recalled.²

We started immediately on the road to the Pueblo de San Jose and camped that night within five miles of the town. We kept strict guard because Castro was supposed to be not far off with a considerable force. In addition to the provisions which the Padre had sent to me I had two oxen killed for my men that night. Before we set out the next morning, I sent my orders to the Alcalde to close all places where liquor was sold. I knew that I had some bad customers among my riflemen. Toward noon we entered San Jose. With an escort of twenty-five men I went to the house of Antonio Suñol, and old Spaniard, who told me that the Alcalde, Antonio María Pico, had become frightened at my approach and had

fled with almost the entire male population. Suñol expressed the opinion that Castro had left Santa Clara with all his men and had joined the main force, which was blockading Micheltorena at Monterey. Then we marched through the city of San Jose and continued our course southward.

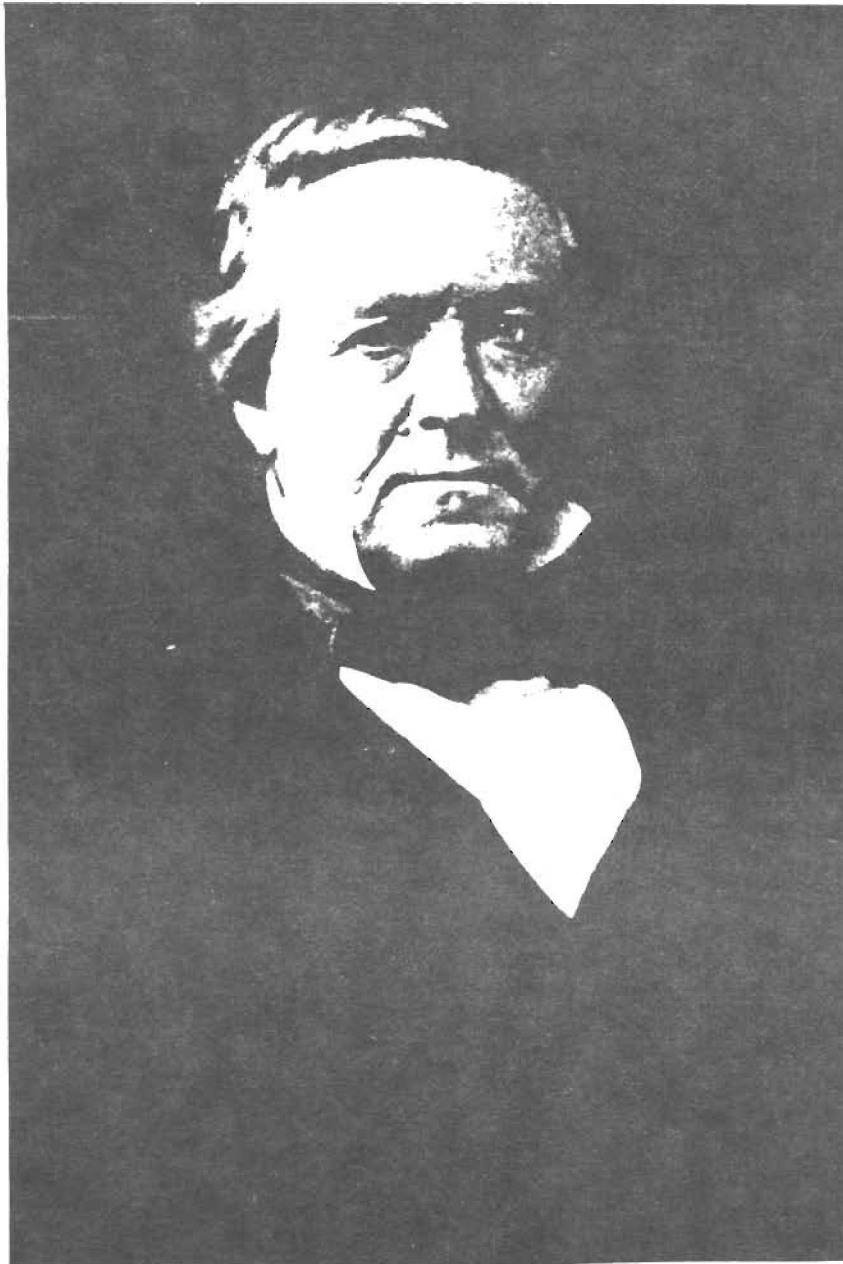
As Sutter continued his march south, he was once again met by Suñol, this time in the company of British Vice-Consul Forbes and Guillermo Gulnac of San José. The three men urged Sutter to turn back as Micheltorena's cause was lost, and Sutter would only stand to lose all he had worked for. Suñol told Sutter that Alvarado had no quarrel with him if he returned to *Nueva Helvetia*. The Swiss ignored their entreaties and continued on to meet up with Micheltorena. They were defeated in battle near Los Angeles, and Micheltorena was sent back to Mexico while Sutter was sent back to *Nueva Helvetia* in disgrace.

Almost simultaneously, Antonio Suñol was undergoing a crisis in his life. His wife, Maria de los Dolores Bernal de Suñol, was very ill. On March 25, 1845, a troubled Suñol wrote to Dr. John Marsh, a reclusive Yankee physician who owned the *Rancho Los Meganos* near Mount Diablo, that³

...My wife is very ill...according to the books, the symptoms which one may recognize seem to be either dropsy or anasarca. I wish you would be so kind as to come and make her a visit. Come to San Jose and take horses, as the case is quite urgent. Bring some remedies with you, if you can, as none can be found here.

Señora Suñol was terminally ill, however, and Marsh could do nothing for her. Both men stood by helplessly as she died on April 17, 1845. Because of Suñol's many contributions to the church, the fathers at Mission Santa Clara graciously allowed his wife to be buried inside the *Pueblo* church, a rare honor for a woman in California at that time. The funeral was conducted by Father Jose Jesus y Maria Gutierrez, who recorded⁴

...In the church of the Pueblo de San Jose de Guadalupe at the entrance of the door of said church, the epistle side--I gave ecclesiastical burial to the body of Doña Dolores Bernal, wife that was of Don Antonio Suñol; she died the previous day after receiving the



*"DR." JOHN MARSH OF RANCHO MEGANOS, WHO
UNSUCCESSFULLY TREATED MARIA DE LOS DOLORES
BERNAL DE SUNOL'S FATAL ILLNESS IN 1845*

From George D. Lyman, John Marsh, Pioneer. (New York, 1947)

the holy sacraments of penance and extreme unction.

Deeply saddened by his wife's death, and feeling lonely, *Don Antonio* invited his daughter Paula and her new husband, Frenchman Pierre (often called Pedro) Sainsevain to live with him. Sainsevain had come to California at age twenty in 1839 to investigate reports of the death of his uncle, Louis Vignes of Los Angeles. Finding his uncle alive and well, Sainsevain stayed with Vignes, a renowned pioneer viniculturist, and joined him in the manufacture of wine.⁵

By 1845 Sainsevain had moved north to San José and had married Paula Suñol. Bringing with him a knowledge of grapes and vines that he had learned from his uncle, Sainsevain "planted some of the earliest grapevines in the valley [Santa Clara] on his father-in-law's lands."⁶ An astute businessman like Suñol, Sainsevain became involved in many enterprises, including the manufacture and sale of soap to United States Consul Thomas Oliver Larkin of Monterey. Sainsevain also helped Suñol open and operate a mill on the banks of the *Arroyo de Guadalupe* near the *Pueblo*. Suñol had purchased the mill from George Ferguson, one of the American immigrants who had been lumbering in the mountains.⁷ (See Chapter 2) Ferguson had never finished the mill, a project which Suñol and Sainsevain ambitiously attacked and completed. Sainsevain then operated the mill under Suñol's direction. Known as "Suñol's Mill," the operation was the first commercial mill in the Santa Clara Valley, and produced some thirty-six barrels of flour daily, which was then sold in Suñol's store.⁸

Sainsevain's fortunes flourished, much like his father-in-law's, and he also gained a measure of stature and respect in San José. He was described in his later years as "one of the prominent vineyardists and wine makers in the state."⁹ Sainsevain fathered a large family that today numbers over thirty one descendants that is still growing.

Pierre Sainsevain lived in San José until the death of his wife Paula on August 19, 1883.¹⁰ He then returned to his native France, where he died in 1904. Sainsevain's sole memorial in California, San José's Sainsevain Street, was changed to Auzerais Street during this century.

By early 1846 Sunol was deeply involved in his business affairs, and in the company of Paula and Sainsevain, he seemed to be adjusting to his new lifestyle as a widower. Eighteen-forty-six, however, brought impending clouds of war to loom on the horizon of California's destiny. Increasing tension over California between the governments of Mexico and the United States, coupled with grievances over Texas, threatened to erupt into a full-scale war in the spring of 1846. In order to better assess their enemy, the United States sent a spy into Mexican California in the guise of Captain John Charles Fremont of the U.S. Topographical Engineers. While supposedly collecting scientific information about California, Fremont was testing the waters for an American conquest of California. This involved extensive travel throughout California, travel that brought Fremont to San Jose more than once. When in San Jose, Fremont was naturally hosted by Don Antonio Sunol.¹¹

Another person collecting information for the eventual American conquest of California was U.S. Consul Thomas Oliver Larkin of Monterey. Larkin's contributions included a detailed report on California, including a list of the principle men of each settlement along with his estimation as to where their political sympathies might lie. According to Larkin, Sunol, as one of the principle men in San Jose, was a¹²

...merchant and farmer, Born in Spain. Aged 55 years. A resident of this country over twenty years, now citizen. Married here. A man of property, note, and character, a counsellor to his neighbors and of influence. Often Alcalde or Sub-Prefect. Not known to what government inclined to. His interests in lands would be advanced by the Union.

The war began on the morning of May 11, 1846, on the border of Mexico and Texas. For California, the war began at dawn on June 6, 1846, when a group of Americans living in Sonoma revolted against the Mexican authorities and established an independent "Bear Flag Republic," which was modeled after their distinctive flag, which sported the rebels' depiction of a bear (or a pig, according to some observers.) The "bearflaggers," as these worthy bravados



*PAULA SUÑOL AND HER HUSBAND PIERRE SANSEVAIN, SUÑOL'S
LAST BUSINESS PARTNER AND PIONEER VINTNER*

Courtesy of Dolores Ramona Turek, Santa Clara, California

were called, caught the *Californios* unaware. By the time the startled *Californios* rallied, the "bearflaggers" had been joined by Frémont and invading United States military forces. The defeated *Californios* laid down their arms after a few skirmishes, and the war was over for California.

To the credit of the military occupation government, they attempted to make the transition as easy as possible by preserving much of the *status quo*. Many former officials under the Mexican regime were asked to serve in their old capacities along with the Yankee conquerors. The Americans realized the importance of utilizing the key men of the former government, many of whom were in the position to seriously sabotage the American efforts. One of those men was Antonio Suñol, who readily accepted the change of governments. He was trusted by the American officials, who asked him to take part in the government of the *Pueblo de San José*. As early as July of 1846 Consul Larkin had asked that a dispatch sent to San José be distributed to the various influential citizens; he specifically requested that "Don Antonio Suñol, as one of the principal men will receive a copy."¹³

Suñol was named as one of the select group of men who governed San José during the occupation government. On December 5, 1846, American *Alcalde* John Burton had selected¹⁴

...Antonio Suñol, Dolores Pacheco, José Fernandez, José Noriega, Salvador Castro, Guillermo Fisher, Isaac Branham, Grove C. Cook, Mr. White, Capt. Hanks, Guillermo Weekes.

The above individuals are called upon to form a committee in the Pueblo de San José, on the 6th day of December, 1846, for to sit and decide on anything that may be required for the benefit of said Pueblo.

This committee, meeting as the sole governing body in San José, formulated many of the laws and regulations that ruled San José during the occupation and were later incorporated into the laws of the City of San Jose.

Where many of the Americans were anxious to return things to normal and see life go on peacefully in California as it had before the war (but under the

American flag), there were others who used the opportunity the war had given them to plunder their more affluent *Californio* neighbors. Antonio Suñol and many other *Rancheros* found their *Ranchos* literally robbed by these supposed patriots. The *Rancho El Valle de San José* was hard hit, as was the *Rancho Santa Teresa*. By far the most overt plunderer was "Captain" Charles M. Weber of San José, who commanded the San José Militia. Weber, who owned a *Rancho* of his own, "with no legal authority...began immediately to confiscate livestock, although the San José Militia certainly did not need horses."¹⁵

Weber's actions angered the *Californios*, who saw him as deliberately violating all that the Americans had proclaimed about good will, and respect for property and fortunes. With Antonio Suñol as their leader, many protested to the American commander of the San Francisco Bay Area, Captain John B. Montgomery. Montgomery, misreading their intentions, brusquely replied on October 24, 1846, that¹⁶

Your petition for the removal of Mr. C.M. Weber from the position to which he has been appointed by the order of his excellency the Governor & Commander in Chief of California & setting forth as reasons for his removal the impressement of horses saddles & equipments for the public Service of the U. States etc etc has been received.

In reply I have to state that all the promises set forth in the proclamations of his excellency to which your petition refers were made in Sincerity & good faith & have been inviolably sustained. Any apparent deviation at the present crisis from the scrupulous & may I say delicate regard hitherto shown by the authorities of the U. States to the security of the rights & privileges & possessions of all classes of the people must be attributed to the unwarrantable conduct of a number of prominent Californians who in treachsions treacherous violations of their Paroles of honor have trampled upon the generous confidence reposed in them agitated & brought into hostile operations the w--- & unsettled elements of the public mind & are now in arms against the United States at the South.

The Commander of the forces at the Pueblo of San José reported several days since the impos-

ment of 16 servicable horses demanded by the public interests for which government receipts were duly given thereby securing to their proprietors a repossession of their property or full renumeration on the restoration of peace & quietude in the Country conditions So much more advantageous than any enjoyed under the former government [sic] as to leave no just cause of complaint to anyone.

I avail myself of the opportunity now presented to suggest to you Gentlemen & all others whom it may concern the propriety of remaining in the neighborhood of your residents sic...of your proper vocations in which no interruption or annoyance will be permitted & I recommend a steady abstinence sic from everything in Conversation or deport tending to excite or perpetuate feelings of opposition to existing authorities until the adoption of seemingly rigorous measures shall be no longer necessary by the government to which end you are sincerely & earnestly invited to give your aid by exhibiting a peaceable & quiet deportmen & a becoming submission to the powers that be.

Montgomery's failure to act and Weber's continued depra-dations finally forced a desperate group of *Californios* under Francisco Sanchez of Yerba Buena to stage an armed protest against the Americans in December of 1846. Both sides met in battle at Mission Santa Clara on January 2, 1847, and after a brief skirmish Sanchez' men surrendered. As they had only been protesting Weber's actions, they were sent home on parole and more stringent guidelines for the confiscation of property by the American forces were enacted.¹⁷

Antonio Suñol, despite his leading role in the written protest against Weber, appears to have taken no part in the armed revolt. He was leading a peaceable and quiet life in San José, where he still played host to visiting foreigners. In September of 1846 Suñol was visited by American Edwin Bryant, who wrote¹⁸

We visited this afternoon the garden of Señor Don Antonio Suñol. He received us with much politness, and conducted us through his garden. Apples, pears, figs, oranges, and grapes, with other fruits which I do not now recollect, were

growing and ripening. The grapevines were bowed to the ground with the luxuriance and weight of the yield; and more delicious fruit I never tasted.

Suñol apparently grew the fruits (and perhaps some vegetables) in his garden for resale at his store. His store was still in operation during the war, but was not without competition. Other stores had been opened, including one operated by the unscrupulous Weber. By 1847, "One was kept by Charles M. Weber, with Frank Lightstone as his clerk, in the adobe building to the rear of the residence of the last named gentleman, while Don Antonio Suñol and Peter Davidson, in like establishments, supplied the wants of the community, which was still small."¹⁹

As 1847 ended and 1848 was ushered in, life had returned more or less to the quiet and peaceful way it had been prior to the conquest. The war was over for California and was rapidly ending for Mexico. In San José, as in the other communities, the *Californios* continued in the same lifestyle they had been practicing for generations; they could only foresee a slow and gradual change under the Americans. All of this was to be radically altered within a few weeks' time, when a seemingly minor event at Sutter's new sawmill near *Nueva Helvetia* would usher in a storm that would sweep much of old California off the map and drastically alter the destiny of her inhabitants.

CHAPTER 6: *Clouds of War*

FOOTNOTES:

- ¹Amador, José María; "*Memoria Sobre de la Historia de California.*" Manuscript in the Collections of the Bancroft Library, University of California. (1878.) Page 87.
- ²John A. Sutter as quoted in Gudde, Erwin G.; Sutter's Own Story. (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1936.) Pages 115-116
- ³Letter, Antonio Suñol to John Marsh. March 25, 1845. Collections of the California State Library, Sacramento. (Translation.) This has also been published in Lyman, George D.; John Marsh, Pioneer. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947.) Page 226.
- ⁴Book I of Burials, Saint Joseph's Church, San José. Entry for April 18, 1845.
- ⁵Bancroft; History of California. 4:117
- ⁶Fox, Frances L.; From Landgrant to Landmark. (San Jose: Pied Piper Publishing, 1978.) Page 35
- ⁷Munro-Fraser, J.P.; History of Santa Clara County, California. (San Francisco: Alley and Bowen, 1881.) Page 329
- ⁸Fox, Frances L., Editor; Florence R. Cunningham, Saratoga's First Hundred Years. (Fresno: Valley Publishers, 1970.) Page 30
- ⁹Fox; Landgrant to Landmark; Page 36
- ¹⁰Funeral Notice; Mrs. Paula Sainsevain, San José, August 20, 1883.
- ¹¹Fremont, John Charles; Memoirs of My Life. (Chicago: Belford, Clarke & Co., 1887.) Page 454
- ¹²Hammond; Larkin Papers. 4:239
- ¹³Hammond; Larkin Papers. 5:139
- ¹⁴Hall; History of San José. Pages 174-175

FOOTNOTES (CONTINUED):

- 15 Regnery, Dorothy; The Battle of Santa Clara. (San Jose: Smith and McKay, 1978.)
Page 24
- 16 John B. Montgomery as quoted in Regnery, Page 24.
- 17 The events leading up to, during, and after this confrontation are excellently recounted and interpreted in Regnery's Battle of Santa Clara. Most of this section of the chapter is drawn from that work.
- 18 Bryant, Edwin; What I Saw In California, 1846, 1847. (Minneapolis: Ross and Barnes, Inc., 1967 Reprint Edition.) Page 316
- 19 Munro-Fraser; History of Santa Clara County. Page 335

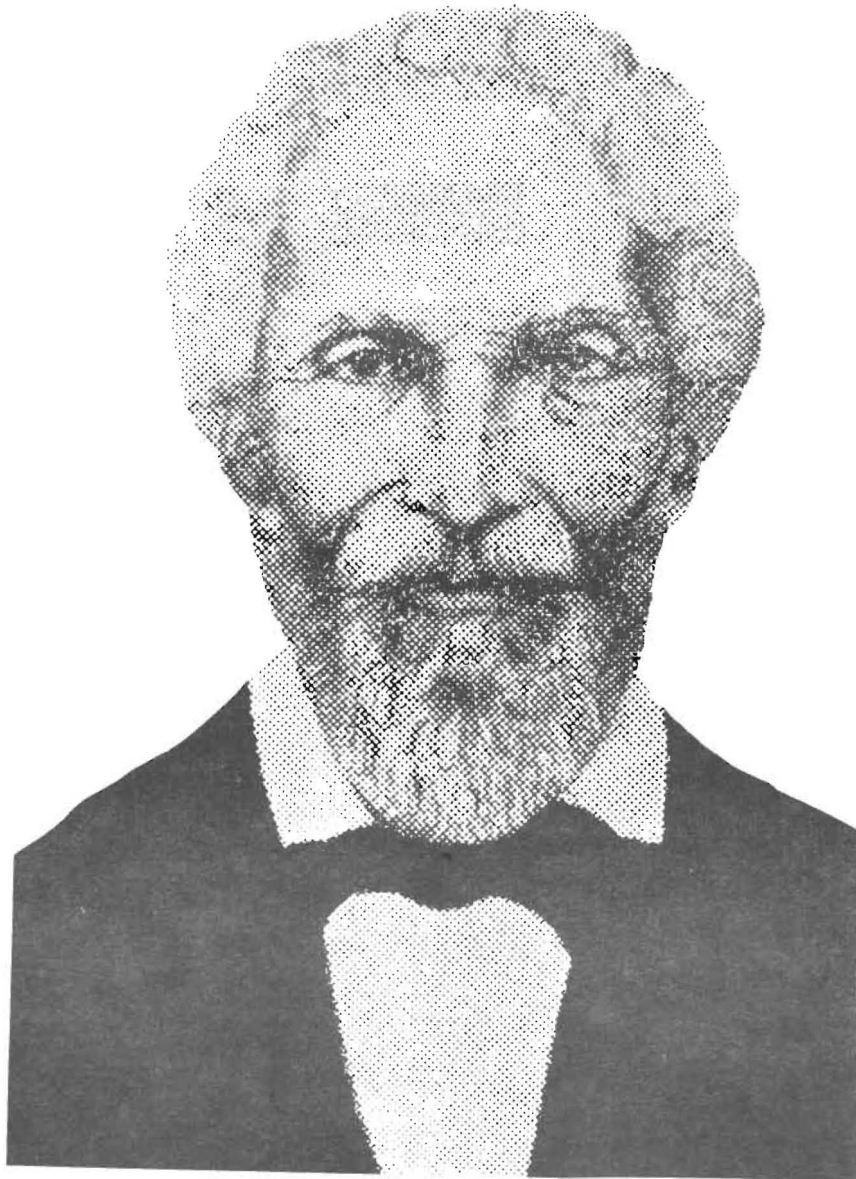
CHAPTER 7: Gold and Glamour

The calm of early 1848 was abruptly broken on January 24, 1848, when an employee of Captain Sutter's, James Marshall, discovered gold in the mill-race of Sutter's new mill at Coloma on the banks of the American River. The news spread like wildfire, and within a short time the entire civilized world had heard of the discovery. A mass exodus to California began, a movement that has been aptly termed "the greatest migration of mankind since the Crusades."¹ Thousands poured into California, seeking easy riches. The resultant tide of immigration in 1849 scoured California of many of the traces of the older days and began a new way of life for what was to become one of the most powerful and affluent States in the American Union.

The first wave of immigrants did not arrive until late 1848. For a short period of time, then, there was a chance for those lucky to already be in California to reap great riches. Within a short time of the news of the discovery, the *Ranchos* and towns became ghost towns as all the able-bodied men headed for the gold country. Gold fever had seized most of the population, and "the whole country, from San Francisco to Los Angeles, from the seashore to the base of the Sierra Nevadas, resounds with the sordid cry of gold, Gold, GOLD! while the field is left half-planted, the house half-built, and everything neglected but the manufacture of shovels and pickaxes..."²

In San José, gold fever struck with full force--by the end of May, 1848,³

...the merchant closed his store, or if the stock was perishable left open the doors that people might help themselves, and incontinently set out upon the pilgrimage. So the judge abandoned his bench and the doctor his patients; even the alcalde dropped the reins of government and went away with his subjects. Criminals slipped their fetters and hastened northward; their keepers followed in pursuit, if indeed they had not preceeded, but they took care not to find them. Soldiers fled from their posts; others were sent for them, and none returned. Valuable land grants were surrendered, and farms left tenantless; waving fields of grain stood abandoned; perchance opened to the roaming cattle, and gardens were left to run to waste. The country seemed as if smitten by a plague.



*JOSE MARIA AMADOR, SUÑOL'S ONE-TIME
BROTHER-IN-LAW AND GOLD MINING
PARTNER*

Courtesy of Steven Graham, Belmont, California

Among those merchants who closed up shop and headed for the gold fields was *Don Antonio Suñol*. Recognizing a tremendous opportunity, Suñol joined his brother-in-law José María Amador, who had married Maria Madalena Bernal, and Pierre Sainsevain on a trip to Sutter's Mill. Both Amador and Sainsevain had mined there previously just after the discovery with excellent results. It may have been Sainsevain's report and earnings which prompted Suñol to try his own hand.

According to Amador's account of the journey,⁴

...We crossed the San Joaquin River on rafts with provisions and animals we were taking with us. We had wheat flour, wheat meal, and corn meal, dried beef, beans, garbanzos, lentils, and sixteen cattle on the hoof. This was just for myself. There were, with me, besides, ten Indians in my service making one peso a day. Accompanying me were Sausevain [sic] and Antonio Suñol who also had their packs (of provisions) and ten Indians between them. We arrived at the Mormon Camp. Sausevain and Suñol did not care for the location because it was too rugged and so we continued to Sutter's Mill. We there learned of the dry placer. They proceeded thither while I remained at the River...Suñol and Sausevain wrote me to come up to where they were prospecting. I went there on the third day...I examined the location and set to work along them. Among us we used to take out seven to nine pounds of gold per day.

After two weeks of mining, and hearing that there were robbers about, the group decided to split up and leave the mines. Accounts were squared and the riches divided, Amador receiving \$13,500, which appears to have been the amount of the others' shares. The entire Suñol party then took boat passage to Yerba Buena.

Their use of Indian servants had been rather clever. Those individuals who were in California and commanded a group of Indians held a great advantage over individual miners, for they were able to pocket the earnings of the Indians. Suñol and his party had realized their advantage and had accordingly taken along some of their Indian servants.

The presence of the group in the gold country was noted in two official

reports concerning the "gold rush." Military Governor of California, Colonel Richard B. Mason, in a report to his superiors, commented on the conditions in the gold fields and identified those involved in mining enterprises. Mason reported⁵

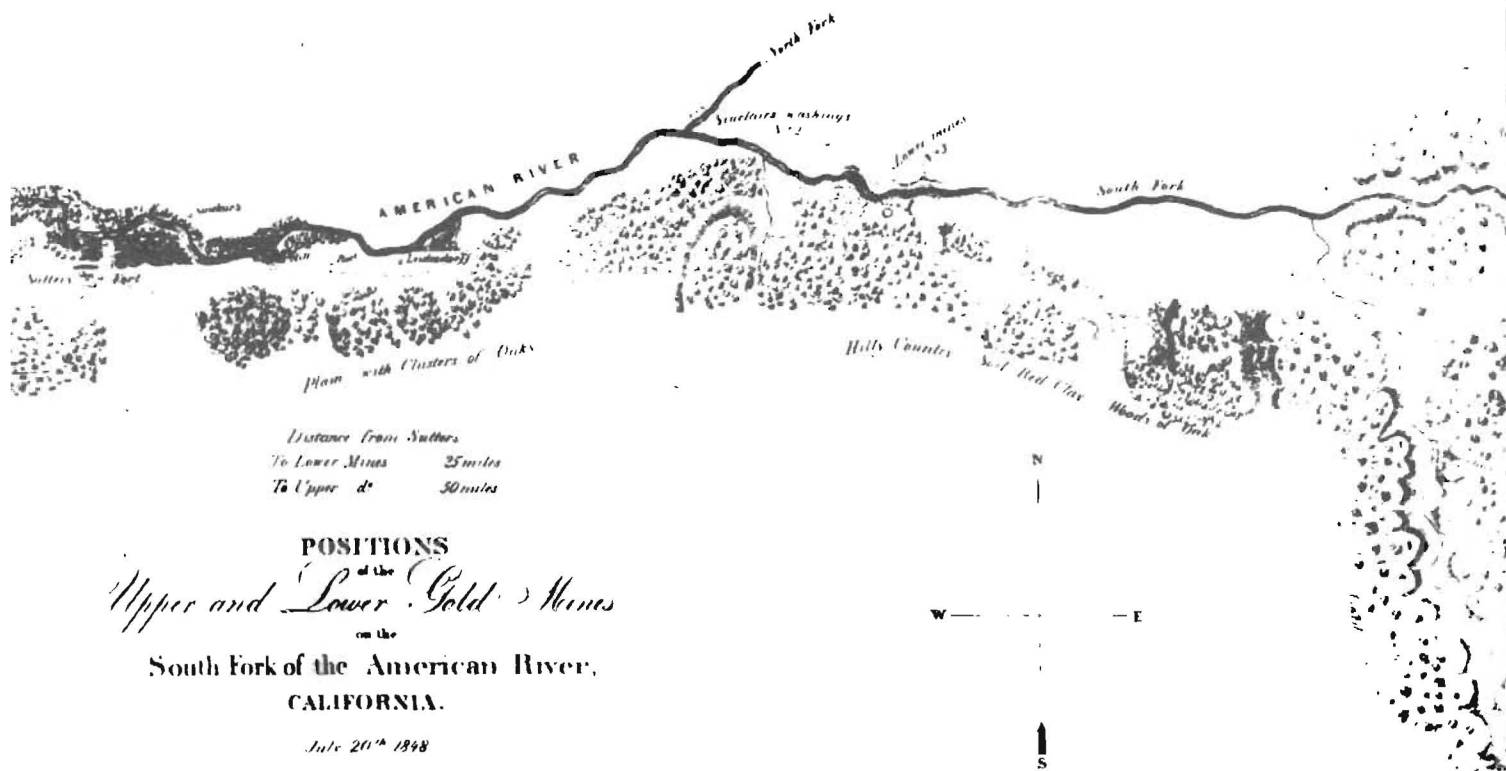
...on the 7th of July I left the mill (Sutter's) and crossed to a small stream emptying into the American fork, three or four miles below the saw mill. I struck this stream (now known as Weber's Creek) at the washings of Sunol [sic] and Co. They had about thirty Indians employed, whom they pay in merchandise. They were getting gold of a character similiar to that found in the main fork, and doubtless in sufficient quantities to satisfy them. I send you a small specimen, presented by this company, of their gold.

* Another mention of the Suñol party in the gold fields was made by French Consul Jacques Antione Moerenhout, who was already acquainted with Suñol. A personal friend of *Don Antonio's*, Moerenhout had stayed at Suñol's home in the *Pueblo de San José* during the owner's absence in the gold fields and had then followed after him. Moerenhout encountered Suñol and his group in July of 1848 and reported that during his visit the "Messrs. Suñol, Sainsevain, Rousillon [a partner of Sainsevain's who had just arrived] and Amador and 25 Indians" had mined one hundred and thirty ounces of gold in a day.⁶

On his way back to the *Pueblo de San José* Moerenhout visited the *Rancho El Valle de San José*, where José Antonio Suñol was watching over his father's interests. Moerenhout reported⁷

...the son of M. Suñol, to whom this beautiful spot belongs and who has a farm and many cattle, assured me afterwards that more than twenty times during six weeks he had been obliged to go there with Indians to extinguish fires set to the grass by the negligence of travelers, and he feared every moment the same fate as the other farmers in this valley--to see all his fields and pastures destroyed by fire.

Since the *Rancho El Valle de San José* lay on the direct route to the gold fields, José Antonio Suñol saw an endless procession of fortune hunters pass through the valley.



RICHARD BARNES MASON'S MAP OF THE GOLD
 DIGGINGS, JULY 20, 1848--NOTE "SUÑOL
 A. CO." OFF THE SOUTH FORK

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

When Moerenhout reached San José, he was surprised to see Suñol at his home. Suñol had returned on August 11, 1848 to attend a religious festival in the *Pueblo*. He had come back to a San José greatly changed by the "gold rush." Recently arrived miners from all points in the world were beginning to flock in great numbers to the gold fields, many passing through San José. From a ghost town the *Pueblo* had been transformed into a rough and ready, hell raising frontier town. On the market *plaza*, which fronted Suñol's adobe home, "Mexicans and Yankees heading for the Sierra brawled nightly. Drovers herded cattle directly through the main streets, butchering animals for sale as they went; the noise, the dust, and the stench were unbearable."⁸

The aspiring miners were desperate for supplies, which meant that any provisions or tools went for exorbitant prices, a fact Suñol had learned in the gold fields when he and his companions had sold cattle for \$150 a head, brandy for \$15 a bottle, wheat at \$120 per *fanega* (about 1.6 bushels), and a blanket for \$20.⁹ The same conditions were found in San José, where the merchants made over \$12,000 a year in some cases.¹⁰ According to one miner, "groceries, provisions, miner's tools, boots and shoes, and clothing, constitute the main items of a merchant's stock in California..."¹¹ Suñol carried these items in his store, and when he realized the profits he could make, he immediately re-opened his store, which had been closed when he headed north for the gold fields. This was a wise move, as the gold fields were rapidly filling with many anti-Mexican miners who openly kept the *Californios* from the riches after early 1849.¹² Also, with so many miners, the chances of making a fortune were much slimmer. Many died poor and broken after their gold mining adventure, while those in the settlements who supplied the miners with their tools and provisions made handsome fortunes. Antonio Suñol was one of those men who had realized the opportunity to do so--and had.

Suñol also joined other *Rancheros*, including the brothers Bernal, Juan Pablo and Agustín, in driving some of his cattle into the gold fields for sale to the beef hungry miners. Suñol sent José Antonio, in the company of his uncle, José María Amador, into the mines with some 150 steers and cows. Amador also drove his own herd of 150. Amador and young Suñol sold their cattle for \$100, \$80, and \$70 a head.¹³ Splitting the profits, Amador then returned to gold mining. It is possible that José Antonio Suñol drove more of his father's cattle into

the mines at a later date.

Antonio Suñol was no doubt overjoyed at his prospering business during the "gold rush." 1849 found him busily involved in trading, buying and selling in the midst of the growth of a major California city. The tiny *Pueblo* was tiny no more, she was a growing town. This may have influenced Suñol to once again enter politics.

On August 1, 1849, San Joseans cast their first ballots under American rule. The election was to elect both local and territorial officials and to select delegates to a proposed California Constitutional Convention to be held in Monterey. Suñol's brother-in-law Antonio María Pico, along with Pierre Sainsevain, was chosen as a delegate. Suñol campaigned for his old post under the Mexican regime, that of Sub-Prefect, but was defeated by a margin of sixty two votes by Felix Buelna.¹⁴ This defeat marked Suñol's final foray into politics. However, he still remained a powerful and influential figure in San José.

The Constitutional Convention met and wrote a Constitution; and then they chose San José as the first capital of California, which would hopefully join the United States soon as a new State. When news of the selection reached San José, there was great excitement. The already inflated "gold rush" market inflated even more in San José. A capitol building was selected; it was Leandro Rochin and Pierre Sainsevain's as of yet incomplete two story adobe hotel on the market *plaza*. It was here that the members of California's First and Second Legislatures convened.

San José welcomed the recently arrived legislators with open arms and hospitality. "During the meeting of the First Legislature, every house was an inn where all were welcomed and feasted, and all through the season not an evening passed without a large party at some home."¹⁵ Antonio Suñol continued his long tradition of generous hospitality in his adobe home just across the *plaza* from the new statehouse, and local tradition records that "Don Antonio entertained at his adobe during California's first legislative session of 1849-1850."¹⁶

The atmosphere and attitude of San José had changed, but physically the

old *Pueblo* was still in evidence, for¹⁷

...the Mexican town extended for a little space beyond the church. Nearly all the houses were made of adobe, with tile roofs, and of but one story in elevation. There were *tiendas* offering for sale their variety of dry goods and groceries consumed by the natives; and *fondas*, which the ambitious American "hotels" had not yet driven out of business.

Antonio Suñol's store was doubtless one of the *tiendas* mentioned. The ambitious American "hotels" mentioned were no more than simple canvas tents in many instances, including the famous "Slapjack Hall," which was run by American immigrant "Grandma" Bascom. In her later years, Mrs. Bascom recalled those days, including many of her then deceased neighbors like "...the Picos and Suñols."¹⁸

When a severe winter and the high cost of living in San José caused the legislators to consider moving the capital out of town, alarmed prominent San Joseans joined together in sponsoring a gala ball. Antonio Suñol joined with the others in signing the following invitation:¹⁹

Washington Birth-Night Ball--Your company is respectfully solicited at a Ball, to be given at the Capitol, on the evening of the 22d instant, at 7½ P.M., being the 118th anniversary of the Father of Our Country...Hon. John McDougal, Mr. Basham, Mr. Bidwell, Mr. Broderick, Mr. Chamberlin, Mr. Crosby, Mr. de la Guerra, Mr. Douglass, Mr. Green, Mr. Hope, Mr. Lippincott, Mr. Heydenfeldt, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Vallejo, Mr. Vermule, Mr. Woodworth, Mr. Aram, Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Bigler, Mr. Brackett, Mr. Bradford, Mr. Brown, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Corey, Mr. Corvarrubias, Mr. Craner, Mr. Crittenden, Mr. Clarke, Mr. Williams, Hon. Mr. Gray, Hon. Mr. Heath, Hon. Mr. Hughes, Mr. McKinstry, Mr. Morehead, Mr. Tingley, Mr. Tefft, Mr. Stowel, Mr. Stephens, Mr. Stewart, Mr. Scott, Mr. Perlee, Mr. Moore, Mr. Patterson, Mr. Randolph, Mr. Ogier, Mr. Wolthall, Mr. Watson, Mr. Witherby, Mr. Roman, Mr. Henley, Mr. Houston, G.F. Wymans, Ben Van Scoten, Van Voorhies, Nat. Bennett, H.A. Lyons, F.B. Clement, Chas. White, Col. Jack Hayes, Major Ben McCulloch, Major Mike Chevallie, Major James Graham, Gen. Don Andres Pico, Antonio M. Pico, Antonio Suñol, John M. Murphy, John Reed, W.H. Eddy, J.D. Hoppe, J.F. Lowe, Capt. W.G.

Marcy, E. Covington, W.B. Olds, A.W. Lockett,
Bela Dexter, Peter Davidson, J.M. Jones, A.
Coindreau, H.H. Robinson, W.R. Turner, E.H.
Sharp, E. Bryne, Ceris Ryland, E. Dickey, A.
D. Ohr, Fred H. Sandford, F. Lightstone.

The ball was a success and the legislators stayed for another Session. However, they were the last, for the Third Legislature moved the capital to Vallejo, and San José forever lost the distinction of being the State Capital. The capital was later moved to Benicia and finally to Sacramento. In San José, with the absence of the Legislature and the decline of the "gold rush," the town, now the City of San José, calmed and once again peace descended upon the once busy streets.

For Antonio Suñol, the legislators were his last guests of note and the First and Second Legislatures marked his last large scale entertaining. By 1851 he was entertaining just a few close friends and family. Also, severe problems were to keep him occupied from now on.

CHAPTER 7: *Gold and Glamour*

FOOTNOTES:

- ¹Historian J.D.B. Stillman, as quoted in an exhibit concerning the California "gold rush" in the National Maritime Museum of San Francisco.
- ²San Francisco Californian; May 29, 1848; as quoted in Rodman W. Paul; California Gold. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965.) Page 19
- ³Bancroft; History of California. 6:62-63
- ⁴Amador, "Memoria.." Pages 97-99
- ⁵Richard Barnes Mason as quoted in Fayette Robinson; California and It's Gold Regions. (New York: Stringer and Townsend, 1849.) Page 37
- ⁶Moerenhout, Jacques A. as quoted in Nasitir, Abraham P., Trans.; The Inside Story of the Gold Rush. (San Francisco: California Historical Society, 1935.) Page 39
- ⁷Nasitir, Page 39
- ⁸Pitt, Leonard; The Decline of the Californios. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970.) Pages 40-41
- ⁹Amador; Page 99
- ¹⁰Street, Franklin; California in 1850... (Cincinnati: R.E. Edwards and Co., 1851.) Page 44
- ¹¹Street; Page 44
- ¹²An excellent source for this period is Leonard Pitt's Decline of the Californios. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970) In particular, Chapter 3, "Greasers" in the Diggings' gives an accurate account.
- ¹³Amador; Pages 99-100
- ¹⁴Archives, San José; August 1, 1849.
- ¹⁵Carroll; Ten Years in Paradise. Page 18

FOOTNOTES (CONTINUED):

¹⁶Butler, Phyllis; The Valley of Santa Clara. (San Jose: The Junior League of San Jose, 1975.) Page 136

¹⁷E.W. McKinstry as quoted in Herbert C. Jones; The First Legislature of California. (Sacramento: Senate and House of Representatives, 1949.) Senator Jones presented the subject in a lecture to the California Historical Society at San Jose on December 10, 1949. This is a published transcript of his speech.

¹⁸As quoted in Rambo, F. Ralph; Adventure Valley. (San Jose: Rosicrucian Press, 1970.) Page 20.

¹⁹Carroll; Ten Years in Paradise. Page 18

CHAPTER 8: Trial and Ordeal

Don Antonio Suñol was remarried in 1850 to Dolores Mesa of San José.¹ The bride was twenty-seven; the groom fifty three. Their fifteen year union was to be fruitless as their would be no more children born of Antonio Suñol's seed. The same year a small group of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur arrived in San José. They had come to California to found a school of higher learning in the still somewhat unsettled new State. They arrived, however, with no place to stay, and after some temporary (and unsatisfactory) lodgings, they were located in the home of Antonio and Dolores Suñol. "Still, that hospitable home, which perhaps approached more closely than most the idyllic picture of Spanish California, seems to have not met with...approval."² After a short stay the Sisters located more "suitable" lodgings.

The school founded by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur became the College of Notre Dame, which is today located in Belmont, California. The first location, however, was in San José. The first classes were when "Sister Marie Catherine gave lessons in the Suñol home..."³ The school then built permanent buildings on Santa Clara Street in San José. The Sisters, however, were not to forget the hospitality of *Don* Antonio and his new wife.

Antonio Suñol and his new wife appear in the first surviving census of Santa Clara County, the Census of 1852. *Don* Antonio was listed as "Antonio Sumol," aged fifty three years, with his occupation as "Rancher" and his nativity as "Spain."⁴ His wife, "Dolores Sumol," was listed as twenty-seven years old, indicating that the census may have been conducted in 1850 and published in 1852. Also listed were Suñol's children, including Paula and Pierre Sainsevain.

The Bernal family remained close to Antonio Suñol, even after the death of his wife and his remarriage. Suñol still held an interest in the *Rancho El Valle de San Jose*, and held in trust his children's interests in their deceased mother's portion of the *Rancho Santa Teresa*. Suñol also served as a sort of financial and legal advisor to his mother-in-law, Josefa Sanches de Bernal. The aged *madre* of the Bernal family shopped in Suñol's store and visited her grandchildren. All of the Suñol family loved the kindly

old lady.

Occasionally Suñol would invite some of his new neighbors to dine with him. Mrs. Coleman Younger of San José "said that in '54 she remembers spending a delightful evening in the home of Don Antonio Suñol, whose hospitality was unbounded, whose trained Indian servants were the envy of many less fortunate, and whose exquisite table linen, adorned with Spanish drawn work, was the admiration of all. The guests included Mr. and Mrs. Ryland, Mr. and Mrs. Wallace, and Mr. and Mrs. Younger."⁵

The Suñol home had been beautifully furnished at this time, according to Suñol's godson James Alonzo Forbes:⁶

...the furniture was handmade and solid mahogany and San Blas cedar, the mirrors were French and costly, the portiers, curtains and carpet were of the best... The piano...was ordered from the same house in London... (Collard and Collard Co.)

It would seem likely that Suñol's home possessed glass windows and wooden floors from a rather early date, no doubt due to his contacts with the various traders. Antonio Suñol believed in comfort.

The Suñol girls attended the Notre Dame school, which brought *Don Antonio* and his wife to many of the school functions. The first exhibition of the students' work saw quite a gathering of San José's "first families," including "the Murphys, the Kells, the Picos, the Suñols..."⁷ The College of Notre Dame still proudly possess some of the work shown at that exhibition, tapestries made by Encarnacion and Antoneta Suñol.

Encarnacion Suñol also enrolled her daughters in the Notre Dame school, where the sisters of the order found that the "two granddaughters of Notre Dame's early friends, Don Antonio Suñol and Dolores...Suñol, Adele and Leontine Etchebarne, loved Notre Dame as much as their mother Encarnacion Suñol. What pleased the sisters in these second and third generation Suñols... was their family pride."⁸ It would also seem that Antonio Suñol's concern for education had been passed on through the generations of the Suñol family.

Meanwhile, Suñol was having difficulty with managing his vast land holdings. Squatters, who held Suñol's title in disdain, were openly seizing his lands,



ANTONIO MARIA SUÑOL IN LATE LIFE

Circa 1860

California State Library Collection, Sacramento

despite the presence of José Antonio Suñol on his father's lands. Young Suñol maintained three residences in his efforts to oversee his father's holdings; one in San José near his father's, one on the *Rancho El Valle de San José*, and the brick building on the *Rancho de los Coches*.

Suñol apparently decided to turn his efforts towards the *Rancho El Valle de San José*, and instructed José to permanently settle there. He began to sell some of his land on the *Rancho de los Coches*, including the brick home, which he sold on June 29, 1853, to Stefano Splivalo, a ship's Captain.⁹ Captain Splivalo was a family friend, and according to family members, Suñol kept a framed photo of the Splivalo family in his home that was mounted on a frame, that, when turned over, contained a photo of the Suñol family.¹⁰ That photo no longer exists to best of anyone's knowledge.

When he moved to the *Rancho El Valle de San José*, José Antonio Suñol had no idea he was going to his death. Among the squatters on the *Rancho* was a particularly troublesome one named John Wilson. Within a year of his permanent settlement upon the *Rancho El Valle*, Jose Suñol had a violent disagreement with Wilson that ended when Wilson shot him dead on March 7, 1855.

The San Jose Semi-Weekly Tribune of March 9, 1855, recorded both the outrage of the community and the shock to Suñol family in response to the news:¹¹

...Don Jose Suñol, a young and highly respectable young Californian, was murdered near the Mission San Jose on Wednesday last, by a man named Wilson. In cowardly cold-blood, the affair can find but few parallels. It appears that Wilson, who is a squatter on the lands of Suñol, had been in the habit of cutting and destroying timber belonging to the latter, and was repeatedly warned to desist. This, as we learn it, was the cause of the hostility between the parties; and in this case there was, no doubt, wrong upon both sides, upon which it is not necessary to express an opinion.

From what we can learn, there was no immediate provocation to the deed--Suñol, while sitting on his horse, was deliberately shot with a rifle by Wilson, who immediately fled, and at the last accounts, had not been taken. The funeral of young Suñol took place in this city yesterday, and the deep and inconsolable grief and mourning

of the occasion, would melt the heart of even the guilty murderer.

The murder of his son embittered Suñol towards to Americans, a bitterness that only increased when Wilson was never apprehended. The circumstances of the death were never fully explained, either, except that subsequent investigation pointed to the fact that Wilson had been the sole instigator. Suñol presented a slightly different account of the murder in later years that pointed to Wilson as the instigating party:¹²

...he was killed by a man who had taken possession of part of my Rancho as a squatter, and, as I understood, for reproving him for unnecessarily shooting so many cattle, because in order to kill one he would shoot and wound several. He would keep shooting at them until one dropped. My son told him, if he wanted meat to come to the house and he could have as much as he wanted, but not to shoot the cattle in that way. This was the origin of the difficulty, as I am informed.

To compound his misfortune, Suñol's loss of his son came at a time when the titles to all of his lands were under attack by the Americans. Like many *Californios*, Suñol had believed that his titles were valid and safe under the American government. In fact, the United States had promised that "property of every kind, now belonging to Mexicans now established there, shall be inviolably respected"¹³ when Mexico had capitulated and signed California over to the Americans. Indeed, there were many Americans who respected the land titles, but they were few.

Many who had come to California during the "gold rush" and had not made their anticipated fortune had turned to another of California's riches: her fertile lands. Most of the land, however, was in the hands of the grantees of the various *Ranchos*. The concept of the *Rancho* was difficult to grasp for many of these settlers. These people felt that "by the 'higher' law they were entitled to lands as free American citizens, to whom all that was Mexican was suspicious and mysterious, not to say diabolic..."¹⁴ These settlers held the Spanish-Mexican land titles in disdain and "squatted" or illegally settled upon the *Ranchos*. Many land holders were forced to take the squatters to court in

a sometimes futile attempt to eject them.

Antonio Suñol was one of the *Rancharos* forced into litigation. On November 20, 1849, a James Hepburne had settled upon the *Rancho de Los Coches*, and on December 14 had erected a house, claiming the land to be vacant and public domain and hence open to "homesteading."¹⁵ Suñol, in the meanwhile, had partitioned the *Rancho* into three separate interests: one for himself, one for Pierre Sainsevain, and one for Henry Morris Naglee, a retired Army officer who appears to have been a friend of either Suñol's or Sainsevain's.¹⁶ All three parties had attempted to eject Hepburne and two associates of his, William and Charles Stewart, but to no avail. Finally, in early 1850, the dispute was brought to trial in the Court of the First Instance in San José.

The lawyer Suñol retained was James McHall Jones, "a lawyer of great experience in the practice of Civil Law and a linguist perfectly familiar with the Spanish tongue. He was, moreover, one of the deepest students and most brilliant men of his time."¹⁷ Hepburne's lawyers were two recent arrivals to California, John Moore and Caius Tacitus Ryland, both of whom were totally unfamiliar with the laws by which the case was to be judged.

Early in the trial Hepburne's friends realized that Jones would win the case if help was not brought in, so they engaged the counsel of Rufus Lockwood, another brilliant legal mind and an accomplished orator. The resultant verbal battle between Lockwood and Jones was remembered for years afterwards as a landmark in San Jose legal history.

Lockwood saw that the jury was mainly American, and would probably vote in favor of his client. He therefore stressed the fact that his client was an American citizen. He saw no real obstacle to winning the case save "the learning and ability of James M. Jones."¹⁸ Lockwood began to attack that advantage when Jones expounded on the various legal aspects of a certain statute that could be in Suñol's favor. Lockwood then rose and expounded upon the same statute "with the facility of a master of the Spanish tongue...expounded it learnedly"¹⁹ and proved it could also be applied in Hepburne's favor. The battle of words continued, with Jones commenting that "this man Lockwood is killing me."²⁰

The final pleas to the jury took place on February 22, 1850. Lockwood

hinged his arguments on the pro-American sympathies of the jury, pointing out that the fourth anniversary of "Gen'l Taylor's victory over the greasers" at the Battle of Buena Vista during the Mexican War was at hand; and to celebrate that great American victory "today with a victory for the American...and against the greaser..." namely Antonio Suñol.²¹

Lockwood almost won his case. The jury deadlocked, which meant that the case was decided in Suñol's favor. Unfortunately, a previous agreement meant that Hepburne had won the case. Suñol, Naglee, and Sainsevain immediately appealed to the California Supreme Court. The case was re-argued before the Supreme Court during the December, 1850 term. The case was a landmark in California property law, for the issue at hand was whether Suñol's title was valid, having derived from an Indian. According to various interpretations of the law, it was illegal for an Indian to own land, hence making Roberto Balermينو's title to the *Rancho de los Coches* invalid when he re-conferred it to Suñol.

After carefully hearing the evidence and the arguments of the respective counsels, the Supreme Court decided²²

1st. If the grantee Roberto were under the disability sought to be established, the plaintiffs having purchased in good faith, have a colorable claim of title.

2d. That, if under such incapacity, no third party can take advantage of it, the sale could be avoided only by Roberto, his heirs, or the Government.

3d. That all restraints upon Indians, in the alienation of their real property, appear to have been abolished.

4th. That the plaintiffs had, at the time of the entry of the defendants, actual possession of a part of the premises conveyed, in the name of the whole.

5th. That such possession is good for the entire tract within the specified metes and bounds.

6th. That they can sustain their action to oust any intruder without title.

I think, therefore, the judgement of the Court of First Instance should be reversed, and a new trial had.

On the basis of this decision, it would seem that Hepburne was legally ejected from the *Rancho de los Coches*. His path would cross that of Antonio Suñol's once again, when both were involved in the litigation regarding the New Almaden Quicksilver mines. Hepburne died in San Francisco in the early 1860's.

Unfortunately, the decision of the California Supreme Court did not have a lasting effect upon the land holdings of Suñol and his fellow *Rancheros*. In 1851 the United States Congress passed an act establishing a federal Land Commission to "ascertain and settle private land claims in California." All land claims were to be produced; the Land Commission would decide their validity. Both the grantee and the United States Government, who acted as the litigant, had the right of appeal. All unclaimed or invalidated lands would revert to the public domain and would be open to homesteading. Thus, with the stroke of a pen, Congress declared all the land titles to be suspect and invalid until proven otherwise.

This new law set aside the Supreme Court decision on Suñol's title to the *Rancho de los Coches*. It also encouraged active "squatterism," and many squatters openly fought the claims for the lands they had settled upon, hoping to seize the title if the claim was rejected. Antonio Suñol, seeking to protect his lands, filed claim for the *Rancho de los Coches* on April 6, 1852.²³ The claim was heard before the Land Commission in San Francisco, and on March 20, 1855, the Commission confirmed Suñol's title.²⁴ When the United States appealed, the District Court dismissed it on April 1, 1856, and on December 24, 1856, Antonio Suñol finally received a clear and valid title to the *Rancho de los Coches*.²⁵ The four year legal battle had cost him great sums of money, though, and the fight for his other lands was not over.

The *Rancho El Valle de San José* was confirmed by the Land Commission on January 31, 1854.²⁶ The District Court dismissed the government's appeal on January 14, 1856, but the government, persistently against Suñol's claim, carried the fight all the way to the United States Supreme Court, where the title to the *Rancho El Valle de San José* was confirmed on March 15, 1865, some four days before Suñol's death.²⁷ The title for the land was issued to Juan Bernal, Agustín Bernal, and Antonio Suñol, and contained 48,435.92 acres.

The toll of the court battles and the never ending lawyer's fees drained Suñol financially and emotionally. The death of his son at the hands of a squatter angered him even more against the unfair American system. He told the Land Commission that²⁸

...we certainly do consider that the government is to blame for all these things...even to this day we are being robbed; the land is not ours, neither is the grass, nor are the cattle; the squatters hold all, and may even take our lives if we give them the least excuse.

Suñol also joined a group of forty-eight beleaguered *Rancheros* who addressed a petition to the Congress detailing the injustices of the law and the hardships they were undergoing and asked for relief. The petition is a unique and extremely well-worded document. Unfortunately, nothing came of it; it stands as one of the last gasps of protest against an unfair system by the victimized *Rancheros*. (See Appendice #3)

The long battles against the squatters and the endless court appearances marks the end of Suñol's public life. His door was closed to visitors after the death of his son, and he devoted all of his brilliant energy towards the fight to save his land. It was to prove to be his death.

CHAPTER 8: *Trial and Ordeal*

FOOTNOTES:

- ¹Book of Marriages, I. Saint Joseph's Church, San Jose. Entry #24.
- ²McNamee, Mary Domenica, S.N.D.de N.; Light in the Valley: The Story of California's College of Notre Dame. (Berkeley: Howell-North Books, 1967.) Page 9
- ³McNamee, Page 11
- ⁴Census, Santa Clara County; 1852. On file in the California Room, San Jose Public Library, Main Branch.
- ⁵Carroll; Ten Years in Paradise. Page 21
- ⁶Letter, James A. Forbes to his niece; December 17, 1906. Saratoga Historical Society Collection.
- ⁷McNamee, Page 39
- ⁸McNamee, Page 175
- ⁹Book F of Deeds: County Recorder, Santa Clara County. Pages 209-210
- ¹⁰According to Suñol's great-granddaughter Dolores R. Turek, who saw the pictures and frame prior to 1920.
- ¹¹San José Semi-Weekly Tribune, March 9, 1855.
- ¹²Deposition of Antonio Suñol before the U.S. Land Commission; Castillero Vs. United States. 4:2719
- ¹³Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (Treaty of Peace Between the United States and Mexico.) February 2, 1848, at Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico. Article 8, "Rights of Mexicans Established in Territories Ceded to United States."
- ¹⁴Bancroft; History of California. 6:535

FOOTNOTES (CONTINUED):

- ¹⁵All of the information presented in this section is derived from the Decision of the California Supreme Court; See Bennett, Nathaniel; Reports of Cases Determined in the Supreme Court State of California. (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft & Co., 1872.) "Suñol, et al. V. Hepburn, et al., December, 1850. Pages 255 to 294.
- ¹⁶See the above.
- ¹⁷Sawyer, Eugene; History of Santa Clara County, California. (Los Angeles: Historic Record Company, 1922.) Page 77
- ¹⁸Sawyer, Page 77
- ¹⁹Sawyer, Page 77
- ²⁰Biographies of the two counsels give an accurate account of the case. See George Cosgrove; "James McHall Jones: The Judge Who Never Presided." California Historical Society Quarterly. (San Francisco: California Historical Society, June, 1941.) and Robert Hastings; "Rufus Allen Lockwood." California Historical Society Quarterly. (San Francisco: California Historical Society, September 1955.)
- ²¹Sawyer, Page 77
- ²²Bennett; Page 294.
- ²³Munro-Fraser; History of Santa Clara County..., Page 212
- ²⁴Munro-Fraser, Page 212
- ²⁵Munro-Fraser, Page 212
- ²⁶Munro-Fraser; History of Alameda County..., Page 334
- ²⁷Munro-Fraser, Page 334
- ²⁸Castillero; 4:2720

CHAPTER 9: *The Last Years: 1855-1865*

Following the murder of his son, *Don* Antonio Suñol fully retired from public life. No guests have registered a stay with Suñol after 1855, and Suñol's store, which had been in operation since about 1820, finally closed its' doors. Suñol had been luckier than most *Californios* in that he still possessed a large fortune; some, like his brothers-in-law José María Amador and Juan Pablo Bernal, died almost penniless.

In order to provide for the children and widow of José Antonio, Suñol allowed them to stay on at the *Rancho El Valle de San José*, the widow Maria Jesus Palomares de Suñol registered her cattle brand for the *Rancho* with the County Recorder of Alameda County in 1857. They also retained their adobe home in San Jose. When Maria Jesus later remarried to Pierre De Saisset, the family resided in the adobe. De Saisset was an influential San Jose businessman and had served as the French Vice-Consul in San Jose. De Saisset was active in community affairs and partially financed the erection of San Jose's famed "electric tower" in 1881. The De Saisset's remodeled and added to the small four room adobe, creating a long, narrow building that reached from Market Street to Almaden Street. The home and the adobe were demolished in 1954 when the parking lot of the San Jose Civic Auditorium was installed.¹ The De Saisset family is today remembered in the University of Santa Clara's De Saisset Art Gallery and Museum, built with a bequest from the De Saisset heirs.

Despite her remarriage, as long as he was alive Antonio Suñol provided for the children of Maria Jesus Palomares Suñol De Saisset. He controlled all of the interest the children had in their father's portions of the *Rancho El Valle de San José*, the *Rancho de los Coches*, and the *Rancho Santa Teresa*. In 1863, apparently to provide the children with some funds, Suñol petitioned the State Legislature to receive permission to sell some of the trust properties. In an Act dated April 27, 1863, "To authorize Antonio Suñol to sell certain Real Estate," the Legislature gave him permission.²

By this time Suñol was also engaged in selling some of his own lands. He retained, however, most of what he considered to be his prime lands, including the particularly valuable tracts in San José. He partitioned among his children

lands he owned between the Guadalupe River and Los Gatos Creek, creating what is known as the "Suñol Addition" to San Jose. This area today lies in the neighborhood of Bird Avenue and San Carlos Street in downtown San Jose.

Through a careful program of selling off choice parcels of land, Suñol was able to generate a large amount of cash with which to pay his bills, which were mainly lawyer's fees. This meant that he was able to avoid debt, which had spelled the end for many of his fellow *Rancheros*, usually at the hands of the sheriff at forced land auctions. Suñol "...made a fortune and held on to it, unlike his easy going Californio neighbors. He possessed the ingenuity, foresight, and dynamic energy usually attributed to the Americans."³

While fighting to save his own lands, Suñol also testified on the behalf of his friends and family whose own claims were winding their way through the courts. Perhaps the most notable was the claim of Andres Castellero for the New Almaden Mines, which Suñol had mined in 1824. Castellero had found the red ore Suñol had been mining to be Cinnabar, the ore of Mercury, and had accordingly filed his claim. Suñol had been present as a witness when Castellero had taken legal possession of his grant. He was, therefore, an important witness in the case, and was called to testify several times.

Suñol also testified for the Catholic church when the title to Mission Santa Clara came before the Land Commission. A major point to be made for the church's retention of the property was if they had indeed continued regular religious services at the Mission following the forced secularization by the Mexican authorities in 1836, when the Mission had been stripped of its vast holdings and the Indians released. The Mission fathers had held regular services, and "the dependable Don Antonio Suñol had testified to this fact...when he declared that he had seen Padre Real regularly on Sundays, since he himself was accustomed to attend."⁴

He also testified for his brother-in-law Antonio María Pico when Pico's claim to his *Rancho El Pescadero* in San Joaquin County came before the Land Commission. It seemed that Pico would lose his grant because he had never occupied it, as the law had required. However,⁵

...by the testimony of A. Suñol it appears that soon after Pico received his grant he

prepared to remove his cattle on his Rancho, but the Indians became hostile about this time...and prevented Pico from settling on his land. From this time until 1848 and 1849 the Indians remained hostile...they continued their deprivations until after the discovery of gold in 1848.

Suñol also testified before the Land Commission for the Bernal family's *Rancho Santa Teresa*. He testified as to the settlement of the Ranch and as to the boundaries, which he had helped lay out.⁶ He apparently was still in league with the Bernal family despite a disagreement which had occurred in 1858, when the widowed Josefa Sanches de Bernal had died. In her last will and testament, she had disclosed a debt owed to her by her deceased grandson, José Antonio Suñol. José Antonio had borrowed one thousand dollars from her and had not repaid the debt at the time of his murder.⁷ At that time Antonio Suñol apparently assumed the responsibility for payment of the debt.

When Agustín Bernal assumed the post of administrator of his mother's estate, he demanded that the money be paid. Suñol apparently realized that Agustín was anticipating using the large sum for his own use, and balked at paying the debt. When Bernal pushed for payment, Suñol complained to the son-in-law of Juan Pablo Bernal, John W. Kottinger, who served as legal counsel to the Bernal brothers. Kottinger wrote Bernal and advised him to not press the matter of the debt as⁸

...you have with the same gentleman a partnership in the "Rancho el Valle de San Jose" much greater interests are represented by your partnership in said ranch than can be obtained from the suit against Sr. Suñol...I see the tempest coming, which will oblige us to stand shoulder to shoulder, weapons in hand, to defend ourselves against the greed of the speculators. While we are fighting over ten cows, we will lose ten "milhas" of land, and dislodged, unhappy and enemies"among ourselves" we shall fall an easy conquest to our neighbors, who now claim two thirds of the ranch, and will keep them if we are dislodged... it is not my concern to judge if Sr.

Suñol owes or does not owe, but prudence, interest and the respect of the kinsfolk should counsel you to resign your position as executor which besides makes expenses for you and gives you no benefit...

Agústin Bernal ignored Kottinger's advice and notified Suñol that⁹

...As we have to give account to the court of the outstanding accounts that there are in the estate of Dona Josefa Sanches de Bernal Deceased we beg you to be good enough to go to the office of Senor Buckner County Judge, and settle with him the sum of one thousand pesos and one hundred head of cattle or sheep as appears in the testament of said deceased.

Suñol, apparently realizing that solidarity was the only way to retain his land titles, as well as those of the Bernals, paid the debt. Perhaps he did not want to jeopardize the title to the *Rancho Santa Teresa*, in which his children held an interest.

San José by late 1858 was changing from an adobe town into a modern City, with many of the old residences being torn down to make way for modern brick and wooden buildings. Suñol, however, still resided in his adobe, which now faced Market Square Plaza. On January 20, 1859, a survey of the area clearly showed "Suñol's fence" on Guadalupe Street on the Market Square.¹⁰ The Suñol adobe was recalled by one old-time San José resident as¹¹

...the picturesque adobe owned by the famous Suffol family, but in my memory, occupied by the Etchebarne family. The early Spanish custom of planting in pots of many kinds and sizes was noticable there; in particular, brilliant potted geraniums planted at the edge of the cloister.

By 1860, Suñol vacated his adobe and went to live with Paula and Pierre Sainsevain. The move was probably made due to his ill health. The adobe was then used as a home by his daughter Encarnacion and her husband Pierre Etchebarne.

In 1864 Suñol and Sainsevain entered into their last mutual business enterprise. Together, they¹²

developed a recreational resort, Live Oak Park,

in the vicinity of Park, Spencer, and San Fernando Streets. It opened on May 15, 1864, and by the late 1860's and throughout the 1870's the resort enjoyed a tremendous popularity. Family picnics, moonlight dances and outside excursions, usually from San Francisco, furnished divertissement for the town and country."

After the death of *Don Antonio* in 1865, Sainsevain became of the sole operator of the park. An interesting note is that the park was located on the approximate location of Suñol's Mill, the first joint Sainsevain-Suñol enterprise.

Around this time Suñol was apparently sending large sums of cash to France, where a friend was allegedly building a retirement home for him. In his last years, Suñol thought back to his beloved France, where he evidently wished to die. However, on March 18, 1865, he received a letter from France that informed him that the money he had sent to the "friend" had been used for that man's private pleasure, and that his supposed retirement chateau had never been built.

The letter agitated Suñol, who began to climb the stairs to his second floor bedroom. Halfway up the stairs, he faltered, and then toppled over, rolling down the stairs to land in a crumpled lifeless heap at the bottom of the stairwell. A stroke had taken his life at sixty-eight years of age.¹³ San José responded with a fitting tribute to their fallen pioneer and respected citizen¹⁴

...Antonio Suñol, who has been a resident of California for fifty years, died in this City on Sunday last, aged sixty-eight years. He was the principal founder of the Catholic Church of this City, from which he was buried. He has ever been regarded as a good man and upright citizen. As a monument to his industry we note that the fine olive trees now growing in the enclosure of the Santa Clara College, were brought by Mr. Suñol from Mexico, forty years ago.

Suñol's obituary appeared in the same edition of the newspaper, and was evidently written by a close friend of Suñol's. It evokes a sense of a deep and personal loss for the writer.

DIED in this City, on the 19th inst. Don Antonio Suñol, aged sixty-eight years. Mr. Suñol was a native of Spain. He came to California fifty years ago, and was emphatically a pioneer. He was connected with the earlier settlements of the old Missions in this part of the country, and was and is a part of the history of this valley. He saw California pass from the possession of the Indians into the hands of his countrymen, and from his countrymen into the hands of the Americans. He contributed more, perhaps, than any other man to the erection of the old church of San José, which was put under the patronage of St. Joseph, the foster father of our redeemer, and it is meet that he should end his labours and go to receive his reward on the day the Holy Catholic Church celebrates as the anniversary of St. Joseph. He was an upright man, and had the most tender regard for the rights and feelings of others. His charities are known to many, his good works will live after him. He was a kind father, a true friend, and a law abiding citizen. The writer of this has known him for many years, and knew him but to love him. He died, as he had lived, an humble Christian. Farewell, kind friend, may your soul rest in peace.

Suñol's funeral took place on March 19th in Saint Joseph's Church in San José. Following the services, he was laid to rest in the Santa Clara Catholic Cemetery, which is located near Mission Santa Clara and was the then in use Mission Cemetery, a function is still performs today.

Suñol's will was filed for probate on March 20, 1865. He had left his property and money to his children, an estate valued at \$84,560, making Don Antonio a wealthy man by the standards of the day.¹⁵ The inventory of the estate showed that very little remained on his lands to remind him of the former days when he controlled thousands of head of cattle. He possessed, at the time of his death, twenty-five head running loose on the *Rancho El Valle de San José*. Even in death, he provided for the children of his murdered son, bequeathing them a full eighth of his total estate.

Dolores Mesa de Suñol never remarried. She quietly lived out her life,



GRAVE MARKER OF ANTONIO MARIA SUÑOL
SANTA CLARA CATHOLIC CEMETARY

Santa Clara, California

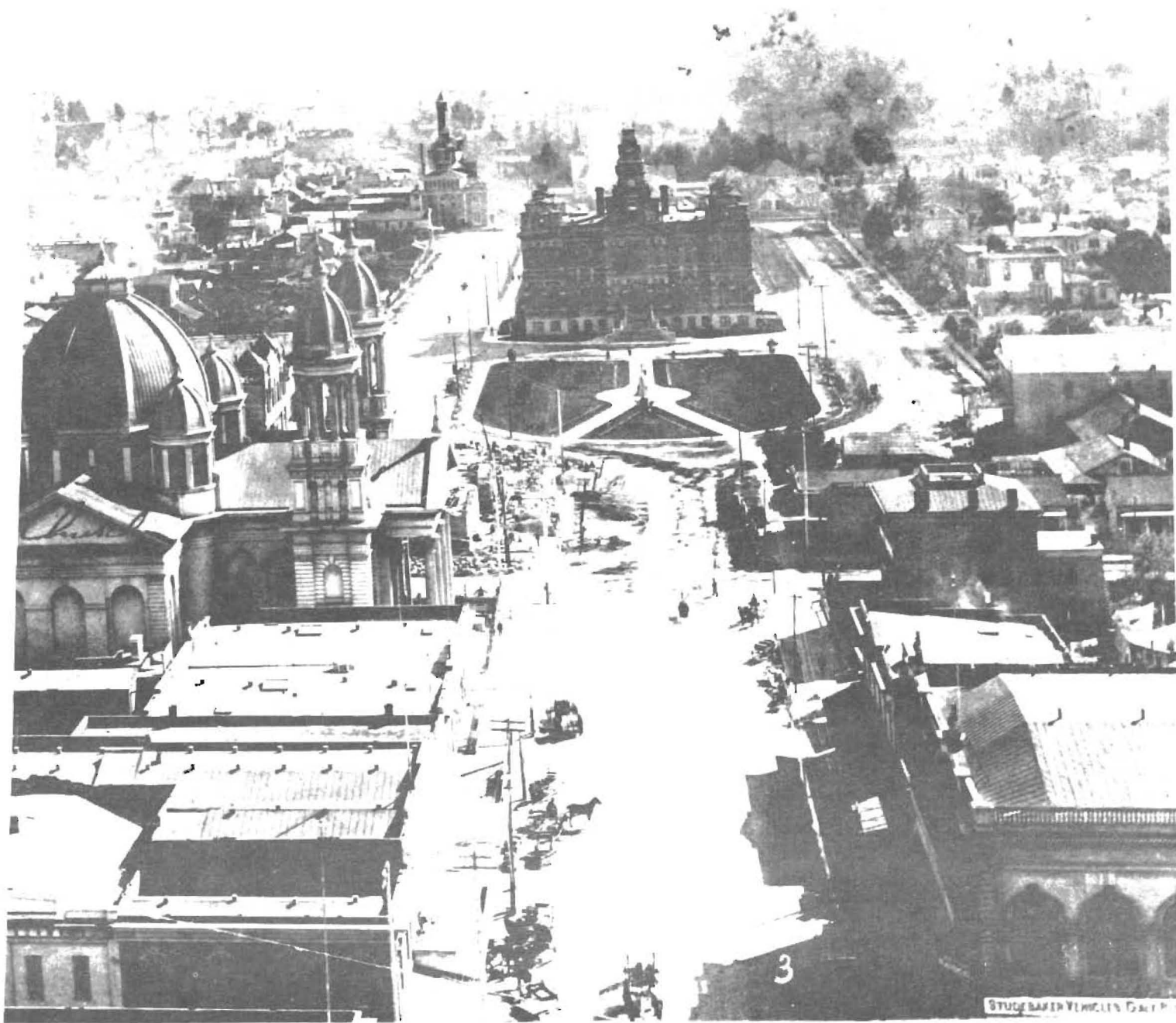
appearing only once in the City Directory of San José as "Suñol, Dolores, (Widow) Dwl. 416 Market."¹⁶ She died on January 24, 1881; her obituary recalled her late husband:¹⁷

DEATH OF SENORA SUÑOL: The death of Senora Dolores M. Suñol, aged fifty three years and two months, took place Monday morning, at her late residence on Market Street, in this City. Deceased was the relict of the late Antonio Suñol, deceased, one of the oldest pioneers of California. He came to California from old Spain, in 1817, and settled upon the spot where San José now stands, then but a Mission and hamlet. He continued to reside here until his death. He acquired great deal of wealth and was at one time one of the wealthiest men in the State. He first worked the Guadalupe Mine. Senora Dolores was his second wife and a native of California. Her maiden name was Dolores Mesa. She left no children, though her husband had a large family by his former wife. The Suñol Ranch, at Suñol Station, on the C.P. Railroad, still belongs to some of the children.

Suñol could not be easily forgotten in San José. Years after his death his friends, family and business acquaintances wrote of him, mainly with words of praise. An interesting recollection was made by his brother-in-law José María Amador, with whom Suñol and Sainsevain had gone gold mining in 1848. Amador recalled Suñol's love of gambling:¹⁸

...I have seen men of high standing setting a bad example to the young by betting money on "Tangano" (a boy's game of peg toss) or "Manica." They used to pile the pieces one upon the other and the one knocking the pile over won what was coming to him and if he knocked the tangano down entirely with one toss and the peso which had been thrown was left on the money, all this went to the player. They then started another match. With my own eyes I have seen the Senores Alvarado, Jesus Vallejo, Antonio Suñol and others do this in the Mission San José corridor.

Suñol also left a high impression about his character to generations of historians. "Antonio Suñol arrived in...1818, and as I understand, came to this valley that year. He was an intelligent and refined gentleman, and had been somewhat adventurous."¹⁹ "In the year 1818 there arrived...another



PLAZA OF SAN JOSE, CIRCA 1890. SAINT JOSEPH'S CHURCH (L) marks the site of old Pueblo church built by Suñol. The Suñol Adobe still stands to the right on the corner of the old plaza next to a large white two-story frame building.

Society of California Pioneers, San Francisco, California

of those grand noblemen, cast in nature's mold, in the person of Don Antonio Suñol...he died in his residence in San José, March 18, 1865, having earned in his life by his generosity, the respect of the entire community."²⁰ Still another wrote that Suñol "settled in this valley, where he achieved distinction, wealth and respect."²¹ Even a full century after his death, Antonio Suñol commanded respect and gratitude for his role in San Jose's history.

CHAPTER 9: *The Last Years: 1855-1865*

FOOTNOTES:

¹San José Mercury; December 15, 1954

²Hittell, Theodore H.; The General Laws of the State of California From 1850 to 1864, Inclusive. (San Francisco: H.H. Bancroft Company, 1870.) Page 762

³Fox; Landgrant to Landmark. Page 28

⁴Spearman, Arthur D., S.J.; The Five Franciscan Churches of Mission Santa Clara. (Palo Alto: The National Press, 1963.) Page 121

⁵Hoffman, Ogden; Cases Determined in the District Court of California. (San Francisco: Numa Hubert, 1862.) Page 143

⁶Transcript of Case 181 N.D. "Santa Teresa" Before the U.S. Land Commission. Testimony of Antonio Suñol, Page 157. On file at the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

⁷Probate Case #352, "Josefa Sanches de Bernal," Office of the County Clerk, Santa Clara County Superior Court, San Jose. "Last Will and Testament"

⁸Letter, John W. Kottinger to Agustín Bernal; San Francisco, May 4, 1858. Courtesy of the Director, the Bancroft Library. Translation By Donald McMurray, Courtesy of Janet Newton.

⁹Letter, Agustín Bernal and Antonio María Pico to Antonio Suñol; San José, October 8, 1858. Courtesy of the Director, The Bancroft Library. Translation by Donald McMurray, Courtesy of Janet Newton.

¹⁰Healy, Charles B.; "Notebook #14: 1859-1860." Office of the County Surveyor, Santa Clara County.

¹¹Kennedy, Helen W. and McKinzie, Veronica K.; Vignettes of the Gardens of San Jose de Guadalupe. (San Francisco: San Francisco Garden Club, 1938.) Page 9. Reprinted 1976 by Smith and McKay Printing, San Jose.

¹²Fox; Page 39

FOOTNOTES (CONTINUED):

- ¹³The information presented in the last two paragraphs was related by Dolores R. Sainsevain Turek, Suffolk's great-granddaughter, who told this story in parts in November of 1977. She heard the story as a small child from her parents and other relations.
- ¹⁴San José Mercury; March 23, 1865.
- ¹⁵Probate of the Estate of Antonio Suffolk; Office of the County Clerk, Santa Clara County Superior Court, San Jose.
- ¹⁶San José City Directory, 1870. (San Jose: W.J. Colahan and Julian Pomeroy, 1870.) Page 129. Reprinted 1973 by the San Jose Historical Museum Association.
- ¹⁷San Jose Weekly Mercury; January 27, 1881
- ¹⁸Amador; "*Memoria...*" Page 124
- ¹⁹Hall; History of San José. Page 113
- ²⁰Munro-Fraser; History of Santa Clara County... Page 77
- ²¹ Foote, H.S.; Pen Pictures From the Garden of the World: Santa Clara County, California. (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1888.) Page

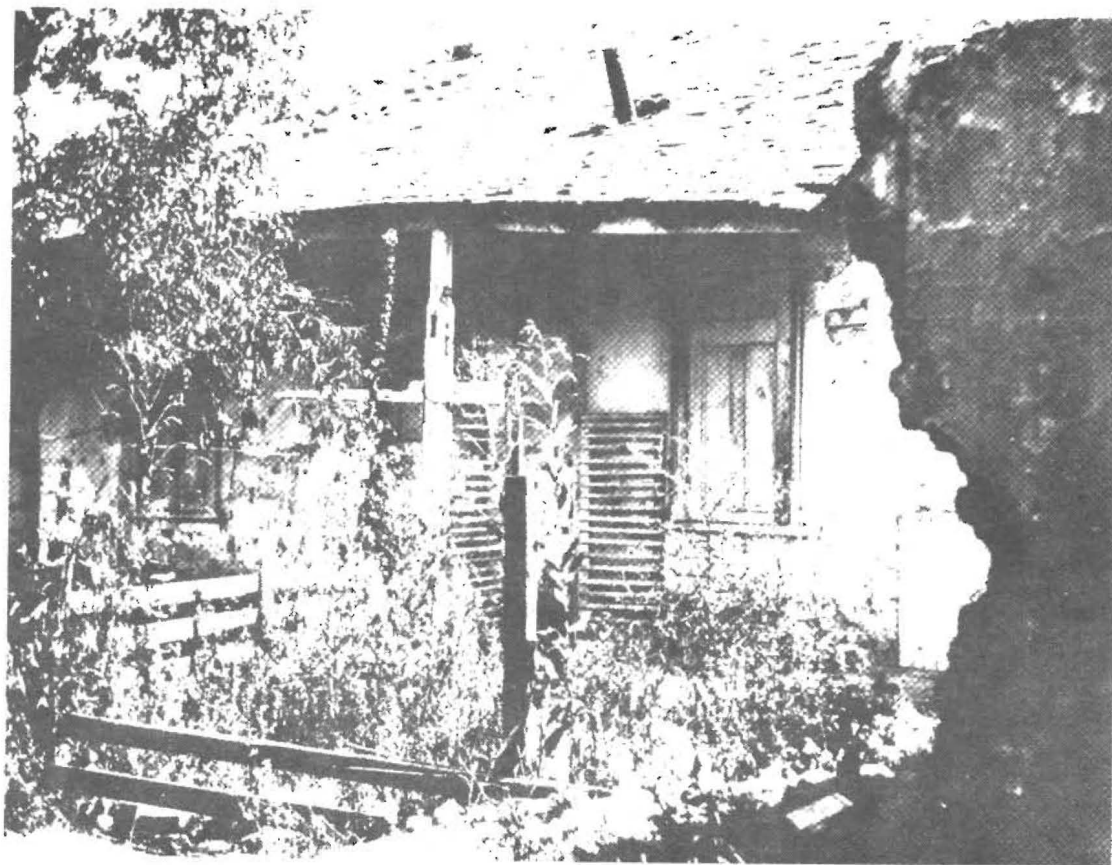
CHAPTER 10: Legacy

Today, some one hundred and thirteen years after his death, there are few reminders of Antonio Suñol. His name is perpetuated in the small town of Sunol, California (Population 250), which is located upon *Don Antonio's* portion of the *Rancho El Valle de San José*.¹ Near the town is the Sunol Water Temple, which was erected by the San Francisco Water District. The headquarters building of the Water Temple appears to be the home of José Narciso Suñol. If so, it is the last Suñol structure on the *Rancho El Valle de San José*. The site and possible archeological remains of the adobe home of José Antonio Suñol is located near the entrance gate to the Water Temple.

On Lincoln Avenue in San José, on lands that were formerly part of the *Rancho de los Cochinos*, Suñol's brick home still stands. Captain Splivalo, after he purchased the home, added a second story of wood and encased Suñol's building. Splivalo sold the home in the 1870's, after which time it passed through several ownerships until it was purchased in 1974 by San Jose businessman John A. Bruzzone, Sr. Bruzzone invested three years and over three hundred thousand dollars to restore the home. In March of 1977 it was opened to the public as a historic site. Some six thousand persons toured the home for a five month period until it was closed in August of 1977. Today it houses private offices and is California State Historic Landmark Number 898 and is on the National Register of Historic Places as the "Roberto-Suñol Adobe."²

For many years Suñol's adobe home stood on Guadalupe Street in San José, which is now part of Market Street. It gradually fell a victim to time and progress. The main part of the home was demolished sometime after 1890 and before 1900. By 1910 only a small portion, perhaps the store, was all that remained. There were plans to restore the home as early as 1906, when Suñol's godson James Alonzo Forbes commented³

...I note with pleasure the action the Native daughters are taking about the old Suñol place. I was a constant visitor and quite a favorite with Mr. Suñol, he and his first wife were sponsors when I was christened; the old gentleman was always proud of me as his Godson. I hope the old place will be restored and rebuilt [sic]



"HOUSE OF DON ANTONIO SUÑOL, SAN JOSE,
JULY 28, 1908"

Author's Collection

as is now the prevailing fashion...I could give information about the old place, but Narciso Suñol, Mrs. Etchebarne, and your aunt Clara's husband Jose Dolores Suñol ought to be able to furnish correct information about their old home... Mr. Suñol did not build the house in 1818, it is possible that he came to California at that time... I remember a wing of the residence portion of the house was of much older construction than the main building which was comparatively modern.

Plans were formulated again in February of 1910, when the San José Daily Mercury of February 24 announced that the Santa Clara County Historical Society "Would Restore Ancient Suñol Home as Landmark." According to the Mercury,⁴

...It is proposed to enlist the interest of the Pioneers, the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West, the Outdoor Art League and other organizations in the project and to raise funds for the purchase of the property. Several of the wealthier men of the city will be approached with a proposition whereby one of them could purchase the property and hold it for the Historical Society as a profitable investment. L.C. Harris, who was present, proposed that should the building be restored he would lease a part of it for a historical Museum, placing in it the finest collection of anthropological specimens on the coast.

The plans never came to fruition, and the home was torn down around 1915. When the thick adobe walls were demolished, "there was considerable excitement because it was known that Don Antonio had been a rich man...In Don Antonio's time there were no banks and so the wealthy buried their gold in strong boxes. A crowd gathered expecting to find Spanish doubloons, but were disappointed."⁵ Today, the site of the Suñol home is marked by the modern hi-rise Wells Fargo Bank and Bank of America towers in San Jose's Park Center Plaza. This is a fitting marker for the site; Suñol's home served as San Jose's first financial center, and today the site is covered by San Jose's most recent financial center, Park Center Plaza.

Also in San Jose is Sunol Street, which intersects San Carlos Street near Lincoln Avenue. Formerly a dirt trail during the days of the *Pueblo*, Suñol



*THE RUINS OF THE ANTONIO MARIA SUÑOL ADOBE IN
SAN JOSE, CIRCA 1915.*

San Jose Historical Museum Collection, San Jose, California

Street was surveyed and laid out in 1865, the year of *Don Antonio's* death. Many older San Jose residents may also recall the old Sunol School District, which was incorporated into the San Jose Unified School District in 1956. The old Sunol School, a "two story white wooden structure" stood on Sunol Street from the late nineteenth century until 1954.⁶ Sunol School was noted for its high achieving pupils, a fact which would have pleased *Suñol*, no doubt. According to the San Jose papers,⁷

A small Santa Clara County School, named for a Hispano-American pioneer, has been making news in California educational circles. During the last 12 years, Sunol has won so many awards for proficiency in every phase of education that it is hardly news any longer when Sunol wins a competition or trophy.

Sunol School was demolished in 1955, and in 1956 the present Sunol School was built. A school, it seems, is a fitting memorial for San Jose's first pioneer with a higher education.

A new building in San Jose marks the site of *Suñol's* 1835 adobe church. However, the fathers and the congregation of San Jose's Saint Joseph's Church fondly remember *Don Antonio Suñol* and his many charities. At the campus of the University of Santa Clara, near Mission Santa Clara, *Suñol's* olive trees still flourish and bear fruit.

There was also the sternwheel steamer Sunol, which was built for Aden Brothers, a⁸

...concern...composed of three brothers, Martin, John, and Joseph Aden, who built...the Sunol in San Francisco in 1890. This vessel was 135 feet long, had a beam of 27 feet, 6 inches, and a depth of 7 feet 10 inches. The sternwheeler was admeasured at 249 tons and her engine developed about 120 horsepower. The Sunol carried both freight and passengers to San Francisco and made a single roundtrip each day.

When the fortunes of the Aden Brothers declined, they sold the Sunol to a fourth brother, R.J.R. Aden, "who operated a wood and coal yard in Vallejo."⁹ Aden utilized the *Suñol* until he went out of business in 1913. She then lay idle until 1924, when she was sold to the Leslie Salt Company in 1924 and re-named

the Pyramid. She ended her days as the Elephant, when she was run aground and abandoned near Mare Island during World War II. Her bleached bones may still be seen; the superstructure collapsed into the shattered hull.¹⁰

Of course, there is Suñol's grave in the Santa Clara Mission Cemetery, formerly the Santa Clara Catholic Cemetery. The marble marker was toppled and shattered during the 1906 earthquake, but still stands with a green fern plant perched atop it. The Cemetery management recently published a guide to the Cemetery, and Suñol is located and described as¹¹

...A literate and popular man, Don Antonio Suñol arrived in San José in late 1817 after jumping ship in San Francisco. Suñol held many political offices in San José under Spanish and Mexican rule, including that of "Alcalde" or Mayor in 1841. A shrewd businessman, Suñol operated what may be San José's first liquor store! Don Antonio's beautiful summer home still stands at 770 Lincoln Avenue in Jose, and was restored in 1976.

And so it is that the legacy of *Don Antonio Suñol* is multi-fold. His memory lingers in many places and in the minds of many. His descendants proudly recall their famous ancestor while helping write a new chapter in the history of their area. These inheritors of the Suñol tradition are listed in Appendix 5.

Antonio Suñol was a pioneer, a man, a father, a businessman, a man of deep religious conviction, a man who did great things for his community and a man who also made mistakes. But he was a man, and nothing more or less. As a pioneer, he is remembered in a San Jose that is just awakening to her colorful and rich heritage. As a man, he stands out among his fellow men of the time as a man who possessed intelligence, presence, character, and influence. He saw the progression of events that shaped the destiny of Europe and of the United States, and as such, he most certainly deserves to be remembered as a witness to empire. His name and deeds shall live in the memories of many for years to come.

CHAPTER 10: *Legacy*

FOOTNOTES:

- ¹Gudde, Erwin G.; 1000 California Place Names. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971.) Page 85
- ²See Frances L. Fox's From Landgrant to Landmark. (San Jose: Pied Piper Publishing, 1978) and Elizabeth Giaratana's Old Willow Glen. (Palo Alto: Consolidated Publications, 1977.) for accounts of this now noted San Jose landmark.
- ³Letter, James Alonzo Forbes to his niece; December 17, 1906. Saratoga Historical Society Collection.
- ⁴San Jose Daily Mercury; February 24, 1910.
- ⁵"Sunol's Adobe Ruin" newsclipping.
- ⁶Borquist, Isabel; "The School Across the Tracks." California Today. (San Jose: San Jose Mercury-News, September 30, 1973.) Page 18
- ⁷As quoted in Borquist, Page 18
- ⁸Harlan, George H. and Fisher, Clement; Of Walkingbeams and Paddlewheels. (San Francisco: Bay Books, 1971.) Page 111
- ⁹Harlan and Fisher, Page 112
- ¹⁰Harry Dring, National Park Service; Hyde Street Pier Historic Ships Park, Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Informal interview on board the ship Eureka, September 18, 1978.
- ¹¹Delgado, James P. and Rambo, F. Ralph; "Santa Clara Mission Cemetery." (Santa Clara: University of Santa Clara, 1978.)

APPENDIX I *Suñol's Correspondence as Sub-Prefect*

The following documents are excerpted from the manuscript collection known as the Spanish-Mexican Archives of the *Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe*, 1791 to 1853, which is located in the San Jose Historical Museum library. The archives were placed in the care of the Museum by the City Clerk of San Jose, who had inherited them from the San Jose Public Library. The original documents were examined and surveyed in the mid-1930's by members of the Works Progress Administration, who also translated many of the documents. The names of the translators appear on each of the cited documents. The pencil translations were also entrusted to the care of the San Jose Public Library. In 1976-1977 the Sourisseau Academy for California State and Local History of San Jose State University, under the auspices of Dr. Robert E. Levinson, Director, had the pencil documents transcribed and preserved for posterity. These translations were graciously supplied by the Sourisseau Academy.

1841

SUBPREFECTURE OF THE FIRST DISTRICT

The Sub-Prefect of the 1st District to the inhabitants of the same.

In accordance of the Senor Prefecto of the District of this Department, his appointment of me as Sub-Prefect of the 1st District has been approved by the government. Before accepting this position I gave the government the understanding that I have little knowledge, and did all possible so that I would not be appointed to this position, but the government would not listen to my suggestion. I now expect all inhabitants of this District to give a little assistance in order that there will be no mistakes; and I will do the best I can to accomplish things to the best of my ability. I am also requesting all of the employees to be found under this Subprefecture to comply with their duties, their obligations as there should be no one disobeyer for the good order and tranquility of the towns.

Do all the sacrificing you can to help your good friend.

Antonio Suñol

(San José, August 9, 1841.)

Translated by Ernest Pinoris

1842

To the Justice of the Peace in San José de Guadalupe

The Senor Prefecto of the Northern District on the 27th day of last December instructs me with the following:

"Answering your various questions that you are asking in your official communication under the date of the 21st day of the month just concluded--pertaining to the inquiries of various citizens wanting to cultivate the lands lying in the suburbs of your town, this Prefecture leaves the matter up to your judgement, as you are the only one who can issue permits to honest and laborious citizens to cultivate the mentioned lands, and if any of them wish to own the land and ask you for a title to such lands, you are referred to the Colonization laws which clearly state that the former owner loses his title to such land when he does not attend it.

In giving such concessions of these acreages always be guided by the act of the law which does not permit right of ownership. Therefore, pertaining to the lands which the citizens of that town are inquiring, we cannot dispose of them now until the laws referring to the lands marks the terms of those which were conceded as community acreages.

What I wish to insist upon is that, always be governed according to the acts of the law referring to such lands."

God and Liberty.
San José de Alvarado on the 1st day of
February, 1842

Antonio Suñol

To The Justice of the Peace in San José de Guadalupe

The Secretary of State under the date of yesterday advised me of the following:

His excellency the Governor instructed me to inform you that on the 19th day of the current month, he established a Superior Tribunal of the Justice of this District, in conformation with the Law of the 15th day of July, year 1837, and that you are requested to publish this proclamation in all the towns and villages of this District for their full understanding.

I am sending you this communication for your understanding and compliance of this superior order.

Please make it known by circulating this document also in all of the towns and villages of the Second District of which you are in charge.

God and Liberty

Antonio Suñol

(1842)

Translated by Ernest Pinoris

SUBPREFECTURE OF THE 1st DISTRICT

Honorable 2nd Justice of the Peace, Pueblo de San José.

You are authorized to take all the necessary precautions in order to close all taverns starting today without making any exceptions. This order will take effect at eight O'Clock tonight, before Easter Sunday. The officials who are in charge of the police department must keep a close vigilance of certain taverns and if possible be on guard against the most disorderly ones. Night patrols must be maintained in and outside of town, since there are some days the Indians can come to town in the day-time for the purpose of looting the village.

I am advising you of this so that you may be prepared.

God and Liberty
Pueblo de San José; 23 of March, 1842

Antonio Suñol

Translated by Landon Fellom.

To the Honorable Justice of the Peace of the Pueblo de San José.

The Steward of the Pueblo de Santa Clara has advised me that Benito Jose, a neophyte, has confessed to the murder of Clara, also a neophyte from the same settlement.

Please take the investigations up with the servants of the settlement about this affair with the assurance that the criminal will not escape.

God and Liberty,
Pueblo de San José, 28th day of August, 1842

Antonio Suñol.

Translated by Landon Fellom.

To the Honorable Justice of the Peace of the Pueblo de Alvarado.

It would be a good thing if you would prevent gambling, of which the abuses have been great; that is in case they have not applied for a license from you.

You will impose a moderate fine since you are aware that the laws do not permit gambling, games, and other worse evils that rob the public.

It is my earnest desire that you prosecute these evils to the utmost since I expect in this matter we agree.

God and Liberty,
Pueblo de San José, 28th of August, 1842

Antonio Suñol

Translated by Landon Fellom.

To the Justice of the Peace in San José de Guadalupe.

A few days ago I told you to call the accountant to adjust the accounts to satisfy the secretaries, and as of this date it does not look as if you have done so.

You must understand that the first warning will pass, but the second time the law will be applied.

Consequently, take up the matter and adjust yourself conveniently and have the accountant come and adjust the accounts immediately.

God and Liberty,
Pueblo de San José, 28th of September, 1842

Antonio Suñol

Translated by Landon Fellom(?)

To the Justice of the Peace in San José Guadalupe.

I have been informed that Mariano Hernandez has been stabbed for the reason that he has stolen some cattle carrying the brand of Jose Higuera, Chief Crisostino and various others; I think the sheriff has told you about it.

Take all the necessary measures and send the sheriff to search his home and confiscate all the hides he finds therein.

Be careful by giving him one more deputy to accompany him so that there will be no trouble.

God and Liberty,
Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe. 30th of October, 1842.

Antonio Suñol.

Translated by Landon Fellom (?)

1843

To Señor Salvio Pacheco

By tomorrow you are requested to turn the court over to Ysidro Guillen in the same order you received it, according to the orders I have received from the Senor Prefecto.

And in the name of our Governor, Manuel Micheltoarena, I am sending you many thanks for your good work.

And because of your patriotism, it is expected that you may again discharge your duties when you are called to do so.

God and Liberty
Pueblo de San José 24 of February, 1843

Antonio Suñol

Translated by Ernest Pinoris

To the Honorable Justice of the Peace of the Pueblo de San José.

The letter which I received from the Honorable Prefect dated the 3rd of March declares the following:

The Military Command of this district requires the enlistment of twenty men for the permanent militia. The Prefect finds it necessary that in order to obtain the best possible results, it is up to me to serve previous notice to the Honorable Justices of the Peace to present a list of all the eligible young men that are to be found in this Pueblo's limits.

From your knowledge of these young men you are to judge their capabilities, whether of laxity of manners or of their good qualities, and if they are fit to be soldiers without causing any inconvenience to their families.

I ask that you transfer these recruits immediately to this Capitol and inform me at your first opportunity of the results and all the particulars concerning them.

I am communicating this to you so that you will take the necessary precautions.

God and Liberty,

Pueblo de San José
16th of March, 1843

Antonio Suñol

SUBPREFECTURE OF THE 1ST DISTRICT

Translated by Landon Fellom

This sampling of Antonio Suñol's official correspondence as Sub-Prefect should give a fair accounting of his roles, his duties, and his relationship with the citizens and other government officials during his term of office.

APPENDIX II *Petition to the Congress of the United States*

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America:

WE, the undersigned, residents of the state of California, and some of us citizens of the United States, previously citizens of the Republic of Mexico, respectfully say:

That during the war between the United States and Mexico the officers of the United States, as commandants of the land and sea forces, on several occasions offered and promised in the most solemn manner to the inhabitants of California, protection and security of their persons and their property and the annexation of the said state of California to the American Union, impressing upon them the great advantages to be derived from their being citizens of the United States, was promised to them.

That, in consequence of such promises and representations, very few of the inhabitants of California opposed the invasion; some of them welcomed the invaders with open arms; a great number of them acclaimed the new order with joy, giving a warm reception to their guests, for those inhabitants had maintained very feeble relations with the government of Mexico and had looked with envy upon the development, greatness, prosperity, and glory of the northern republic, to whom they were bound for reasons of commercial and personal interests, and also because of its principles of freedom had won their friendliness.

When peace was established between the two nations by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, they joined in the general rejoicing with their new American fellow countrymen, even though some--a very few indeed--decided to remain in California as Mexican citizens, in conformity with the literal interpretation of that solemn instrument; they immediately assumed the position of American citizens that was offered them, and since then have conducted themselves with zeal and faithfulness and with no less loyalty than those whose great fortune it was to be born under the flag of the Northern American republic--believing, thus, that all their rights were insured in the treaty, which declares that their property shall be inviolably protected and insured; seeing the realization of the promises made to them by United States officials; trusting and hoping to participate

in the prosperity and happiness of the great nation of which they now had come to be an integral part, and in which, of it was true they now found the value of their possessions increased, that was also to be considered compensation for their sufferings and privations.

The inhabitants of California, having had no choice but to dedicate themselves to the rural and pastoral life and allied occupations, ignorant even of the laws of their own country, and without the assistance of lawyers (of whom there were so few in California) to advise them on legal matters, elected from among themselves their judges, who had no knowledge of the intricate technical terms of the law and who were, of course, incompetent and ill-fitted to occupy the delicate position of forensic jidicature. Scattered as the population was over a large territory, they could hardly hope that the titles under which their ancestors held and preserved their lands, in many cases for over half a century, would be able to withstand a scrupulously critical examination before a court. They heard with dismay the appointment, by Act of Congress, of a Commission with the right to examine all titles and confirm or disapprove them, as their judgment considered equitable. Though this honorable body has doubtless had the best interests of the state at heart, still it has brought about the most disastrous effects upon those who have the honor to subscribe their names to this petition, for, even though all landholders possessing titles under the Spanish or Mexican governments were not forced by the letter of the law to present them before the Commission for confirmation; nevertheless all those titles were at once considered doubtful, their origin questionable, and, as a result, worthless for confirmation by the Commission; all landholders were thus compelled de facto to submit their titles to the Commission for confirmation, under the alternative that, if they were not submitted, the lands would be considered public property.

The undersigned, ignorant, then, of the forms and proceedings of an American court of justice, were obliged to engage the services of American lawyers to present their claims, paying them enormous fees. Not having other means with which to meet these expenses but their lands, they were compelled to give up part of their property, in many cases as much as a fourth of it, and in other cases even more.

The discovery of gold attracted an immense number of immigrants to this

country, and, when they perceived that the titles of the old inhabitants were considered doubtful and their validity questionable; they spread themselves over the land as though it were public property, taking possession of the improvements made by the inhabitants, many times seizing even their houses (where they had lived for many years with their families), taking and killing the cattle and destroying their crops; so that those before had owned great numbers of cattle that could have been counted by the thousands, now found themselves without any, and the men who were the owners of many leagues of land now were deprived of the peaceful possession of even one vara.

The expenses of the new state government were great, and the money to pay for these was only to be derived from the tax on property, and there was little property in this new state but the above mentioned lands. Onerous taxes were levied by new laws, and if these were not paid the property was put up for sale. Deprived as they were of the use of their lands, from which they had no lucrative returns, the owners were compelled to mortgage them in order assume the payment of taxes already due and constantly increasing. With such mortgages upon property greatly depreciated (because of its uncertain status), without crops or rents, the owners of those lands were not able to borrow money except at usurious rates of interest. The usual interest rate at that time was high, but with such securities it was exorbitant; and so they were forced either to sell or lose their lands; in fact, they were forced to borrow money even for the purchase of the bare necessities of life. Hoping that the Land Commission would take quick action in the revision of the titles and thus relieve them from the state of penury in which they found themselves, they mortgaged, paying compound interest at the rate of from three to ten percent a month. The long awaited relief would not arrive; action from the Commission was greatly delayed; and, even after the Commission would pronounce judgement on the titles, it was still necessary to pass through a rigorous ordeal in the District Court; and in some cases are, even now, pending before the Supreme Court of the nation. And in spite of the final examination, too long a delay was experienced (in many cases it is still being experienced), awaiting the surveys to be made by the United States Surveyor-General. The general Congress overlooked making the necessary appropriations to that end, and the people were then obliged to face new taxes to pay for the surveys, or else wait even longer while undergoing the continued and exhausting demands of high and

usurious taxes. Many persons assumed the payment of the surveyors and this act was cause for objection from Washington, the work of those surveyors rejected, and the patents refused, for the very same reason that they themselves had paid for the surveys. More than 800 petitions were presented to the Land Commission, and already 10 years of delays have elapsed and only some 50 patents have been granted.

The petitioners, finding themselves unable to face such payments because of the rates of interest, taxes, and litigation expenses, as well as having to maintain their families, were compelled to sell, little by little, the greater part of their old possessions. Some, who at one time had been the richest landholders, today find themselves without a foot of ground, living as objects of charity--and even in sight of the many leagues of land, which, with many thousand head of cattle, they had once called their own; and those of us who, by means of strict economy and immense sacrifices, have been able to preserve a small portion of our property, have heard to our great dismay that new legal projects are being planned to keep us still longer in suspense, consuming, to the last iota, the property left to us by our ancestors. Moreover, we see with deep pain that efforts are being made to induce this honorable bodies to pass laws authorizing bills of review, and other illegal proceedings, with a view to prolong still further the litigation of our claims.

The manifest injustice of such an act must clearly be apparent to those honorable bodies when they consider that the native Californians were an agricultural people and that they have wished to continue so; but they have encountered the obstacle of the enterprising genius of the Americans, who have assumed possession of their lands, taken their cattle, and destroyed their woods, while the Californians have been thrown among those who were strangers to their language, customs, laws, and habits.

The undersigned respectfully maintain that, if the promises and honor of the United States government, so solemnly pledged, had been faithfully kept, Sonora, Baja California, and all the northern part of Mexico, seeing with envy the happy state of the Californians under the new government, would have already be anxiously clamoring to be admitted to the glorious confederation; but now, aware of the pitiful state in which the Californians find themselves, they adhere with almost frenzied despair to the feeble shadow of protection they still enjoy

under the confused, weak, and insecure government of unfortunate Mexico, looking forward with pain and dismay to an approaching conquest.

The American people and the state of California would be no less prosperous in that event. If the land titles had been confirmed to their holders, the land would not be valued higher than the price stipulated by the government; it would have been covered with houses and families, had they owned the land, and they would have given it the attention and care necessary to insure future production and value, while, actually, they consider themselves trespassers on the land and not its rightful owners, and so they have cultivated it temporarily for their immediate use, they have devastated it, exhausted its fertility, destroyed its timber without giving a thought to the future. It would have been better for the state, and for those newly established in it, if all those titles to lands, the expedientes of which were properly registered in the Mexican archives, had been declared valid; if those holders of titles derived from former governments had been declared perpetual owners and presumptive possessors of lands (in all civilized countries they would have acknowledged legitimate owners of the land); and if the government, or any private person or official who might have pretensions to the contrary, should have been able to establish his claim only through a regular court of justice, in accordance with customary judicial procedure. Such a course would have increased the fame of the conquerors, won the faith and respect of the conquered, and contributed to the material prosperity of the nation at large.

Therefore, the undersigned, with dignified obedience and respect to the sovereignty, beg, trust, and expect the justice and equity that should characterize such honorable bodies, by giving consideration to, and refusing, not only the before mentioned bill of review, but also any other demands from the state which, as at present, may tend to work injustice and cause the destruction of the rights of the old native Californians; but they should, on the contrary, respect, protect, and uphold the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, by which conduct both the honor of your august bodies, and that of the general government of the United States as well, will be insured. The undersigned so swear.

San Francisco, February 21, 1859

Antonio María Pico
Antonio Chavolla

Jacob P. Leese
Jose G. Estudillo

Antonio Suñol	Manuel G. Soberanes
Pedro Chaboya	Lazaro Ygera
Chrisostomo Galindo	Pedro Bernal
Angel Quevedo	Pedro Garcia
Atilano Hernandez	Jesus Gonzalez
Fran ^{co} Buló	Fulgencio Salazar
Felipe Gongora	Juan G. Geva
Albisu Mesa	Juan Gonzalez
Fernanda Chavolla	Frank Lightston
Joaquin Higera 2 ^o	Petra Pacheco de Soto
J. A. Archuleta	Juana Soto de Lightston
Fran ^{co} C. Munos	Rafaela Soto, widow
C.P. de la Mora	Estevan Joaurdain
Carlos Berryessa	A. Mongeon
Rafael Galindo	L. Ellseler
Jose Noriega	A. Agarfey
Joaquin Higuera	B. Fernandez
Basilio Bernal	Nicolas Pacheco
Carmen Berreyessa de	Ines Pacheco
Pinedo	Lorenzo Pacheco
Pedro Mesa	C. Visente Soto
Jose Urridias, heir	Encarnasi Pacheco
of Alviso Rancho	Talecio Higera
Secundino Robles	Francisca Pacheco

This appended work was originally published in Robert Glass Cleland's The Cattle on a Thousand Hills. (San Marino: The Huntington Library, 1951) between pages 238 and 243. The original is on file in the Huntington Library as a part of the Stearns Manuscript.

APPENDIX III Last Will and Testament

I, the undersigned *Antonio Suñol*, of the City of San Jose, County of Santa Clara, and State of California, being of sound mind and memory, do make publish and declare this my last will and testament.

I declare that I am justly indebted to my daughter *Antonia Ahern* the sum of five hundred and fifteen dollars; and to my son *Dolores Suñol*, the sum of One Hundred and seventy eight ⁵⁰/100 dollars, being the money used by me for the sale of their interest in the Santa Theresa Rancho, which sums I desire to be paid to them as soon as my Executors shall have sufficient money in their hands to pay the same.

I give, devise and bequeath to my Executors hereinafter named and singular my property real and personal, wheresoever situated, and all monies belonging to me of which I may die possessed. In trust nevertheless and to and for the following uses and purposes. I desire and fully authorize my said Executors to sell either at public or private sale sufficient of my real estate to realize sufficient monies to pay all my just debts and liabilities, and the bequests and devises herein named, as soon as to them may seem advisable, and from such sale to fund or place out of interest the sum of Five Thousand Dollars, which I hereby give devise and bequeath to my daughter *Antonia Ahern*, and to her issue lawfully begotten for her and their exclusive use and benefit, and should she die without such issue, then I direct that said portion be equally divided between her brothers and sisters, and I hereby nominate and appoint my said Executors as Trustees for the purpose of carrying this devise into effect. The interest from said sum to be paid as collected to the said *Antonia Ahern*. Should my present wife *Dolores Mesa Suñol* elect to choose the devise and bequest herein named, in lieu of what the law may set aside for her, I do give devise and bequeath unto her my said wife, out of the residue of my Estate and after the payments of said debts and legacies above named one-eighth part and portion of my said Estate both real and personal. To *Narcisso*, *Dolores*, and *Josepha Suñol*, the three minor children of my late son *Jose Suñol*, deceased, I give, devise, and bequeath jointly, also, one-eighth part and

portion of said Estate both real and personal, after the payment of said debts and devises. To my other children, to wit: *Paula Sainsevaine*, wife of *Pedro Sainsevaine*, *Encarnacion Echibana*, wife of *Peter Echibana*, *Narcisso Suñol*, *Antonia Ahern*, *Dolores Suñol* and *Francisco La Coste*, infant child of my late daughter *Francisca La Coste*, deceased, after the payment of said debts, legacies, and devises I give and devise and bequeath each one eighth part and portion of the residue of my said Estate, both real and personal, it being my wish and intention to give to my wife and children as above named an equal one undivided eighth interest in and to the residue of my said Estate after the payment of said debts and bequests, share and share alike. It is my desire that my present residence, with the furniture therein be not sold or disposed of, unless necessary, and that the same shall be used by my said wife and children as their home. I do make constitute and appoint my son *Narciso Suñol* and *Henry M. Naglee* of said County and State, as Executors of this my last will and testament, to act without giving any bond or security of any kind, and in the case of the inability to act of either of my said Executors by reason of absence, sickness, death, resignation or otherwise, I make, constitute and appoint as Executor in his stead and place without bond or security as such *P.O. Minor*, of the said County and State. Should my said wife *Dolores* refuse to accept the gift and devise to her above mentioned, then the said one-eighth portion so given and devised I give, bequeath and devise to my children as above named, to be divided equally between them, share and share alike.

Hereby revoking and declaring null and void all other or former wills made by me, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 7th day of March, A.D. 1865.

ANTONIO SUÑOL (SEAL)

This Last Will and Testament of Don Antonio Maria Suñol was attached to the probate of his estate, which was filed in the Office of the County Clerk, Santa Clara County Superior Court, San Jose.

APPENDIX IV: Descendants

Dolores Ramona Sainsevain Turek, Santa Clara
George William Strickler, Santa Clara
Marie Louise Strickler Mann, San Leandro
Sharon Louise Mann Roberts, Livermore
Dawn Marie Roberts, Livermore
Jon Douglas Roberts, Livermore
Lester Henry Strickler, Los Gatos
Jerry Arthur Strickler, San Jose
Sonya Laureen Strickler, San Jose
Ryan Jaret Strickler, San Jose
Janet Leslee Strickler, Fremont
Lillian Leslie Nieri Wood, Santa Clara
Shirley Mae Childers Morgan, Santa Clara
Sandra Jean Morgan Hauck, San Jose
Jason Wayne Hauck, San Jose
Patricia Ann Morgan Franco, San Jose
Alicia Renee Franco, San Jose
Tina Marie Franco, San Jose
Richard James Morgan, Santa Clara
Shelley Ann Morgan, Santa Clara
William Charles Butler, Sunnyvale
Ralph Hector Butler, San Jose
Salena Julie Butler, San Jose
Frances Charlotte Balcon Hicks, Oakland
Kelly Ann Hicks, Oakland
Patrick John Hicks, Oakland
Kathryn Lynn Hicks, Oakland
Clara Suñol, Yountville
Beatrice Sunol McLean, Oakland
Belle Paula Sainsevain Schweitzer, Winston, Oregon
Eugene William Schweitzer, Monterey
Stanley Eugene Schweitzer, Winston, Oregon

William Paul Schweitzer, Winston, Oregon
Sean Allen Schweitzer, Winston, Oregon
Richard Jay Schweitzer, Dillard, Oregon
Wendy Ardine Schweitzer, Dillard, Oregon
Charles William Schweitzer, Dillard, Oregon
Stephen Paul Schweitzer, Dillard, Oregon
William Eldon Schweitzer, Winston, Oregon
Justin Schweitzer, Winston, Oregon
Jonah Schweitzer, Winston, Oregon
Aaron Achweitzer, Winston, Oregon
Harold Suñol Weller, San Jose
Ernest John Weller, San Jose
William Ernest Weller, San Jose
John Corbett Weller, San Jose
James Matthew Weller, San Jose
Lillian Jean Weller Kolb, San Jose
Garrett M. Kolb, San Jose
Gregory J. Kolb, San Jose
Karl G. Kolb, San Jose

It has been said that a man lives in through his descendants.' The blood of Antonio María Suñol flows in the veins of these fifty-one known descendants. Many still live in the San Francisco Bay Area; others live farther away. Some may be aware of their heritage, others may not. Those who know are deeply proud of their ancestor. This list of Suñol descendants was graciously compiled and supplied by Dolores Ramona Sainsevain Turek, a very proud descendant.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PUBLISHED WORKS:

- Bancroft, Hubert Howe; History of California. (7 Volumes) San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft and Company, 1888.
- Bennett, Nathaniel; Reports of Cases Determined in the Supreme Court, State of California. San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft and Company, 1872.
- Brown, Alan K.; Sawpits in the Spanish Redwoods 1787-1849. San Mateo: San Mateo County Historical Association, 1966.
- Bryant, Edwin; What I Saw in California, 1846, 1847. Minneapolis: Ross and Barnes, 1967. (Reprint Edition)
- Bulmore, Laurence, and Milton Lanyan; Cinnabar Hills. Los Gatos: The Village Printers, 1967.
- Butler, Phyllis F.; The Valley of Santa Clara. San Jose: The Junior League of San Jose, 1975.
- Carroll, Mary Bowden; Ten Years in Paradise. San Jose: Popp and Hogan, 1903.
- Cleland, Robert Glass; The Cattle on a Thousand Hills, Southern California 1850-1880. San Marino: The Huntington Library, 1964.
- Colahan, W.J. and Julian Pomeroy; San Jose City Directory, 1870. San Jose: Colahan and Pomeroy, 1870. (Reprinted 1973 by the San Jose Historical Museum Association)
- Dana, Julian; Sutter of California. New York: Halcyon Press, 1934.
- Delgado, James P. and F. Ralph Rambo; Santa Clara Mission Cemetery. Santa Clara: Santa Clara University, 1978.
- Dillon, Richard; Fool's Gold: A Biography of John A. Sutter. New York: Coward-McCann, 1967.
- Davis, William Heath; Seventy Five Years in California. San Francisco: John Howell, 1929.
- Evans, Luther H., Editor; Inventory of the County Archives of California, Number 44, Santa Clara County (San Jose). San Francisco: Historic Records Survey, Works Progress Administration, 1939.
- Foote, H.S. Pen Pictures From the Garden of the World; Santa Clara County, California. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1888.
- Fox, Frances L., Editor; Florence R. Cunningham; Saratoga's First Hundred Years. Fresno: Valley Publishers, 1970.

BIBLIOGRAPHY, CONTINUED:

- Fox, Frances L.; San Jose's Luis Maria Peralta and His Adobe. San Jose: Smith and McKay Printing, 1976.
- Fox, Frances L.; From Landgrant to Landmark. San Jose: Pied Piper Publishing, 1978.
- Fremont, John Charles; Memoirs Of My Life... Chicago: Belford, Clarke and Company, 1887.
- Giaratana, Elizabeth; Old Willow Glen. Palo Alto: Consolidated Publications, 1977.
- Gilbert, Benjamin F.; Santa Teresa Laboratory: A Place in History. San Jose: International Business Machines Corporation, 1978.
- Goya y Lucientes, Francisco; Los Desastres de la Guerra. Madrid: Academia Real de Nobles Artes de San Fernando, 1863.
- Gudde, Erwin G.; Sutter's Own Story. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1936.
- Gudde, Erwin G.; 1000 California Place Names. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971.
- Guinn, J.M.; History of the State of California and Biographical Record of Oakland and Environs. Los Angeles: Historic Record Company, 1907.
- Hall, Frederic; History of San Jose. San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft and Company, 1877.
- Harlan, George H. and Clement Fisher; Of Walkingbeams and Paddlewheels. San Francisco: Bay Books, 1971.
- Hittell, Theodore H.; The General Laws of the State of California from 1850 to 1864 Inclusive. San Francisco: H.H. Bancroft Company, 1870.
- Hunt, Rockwell D.; California and Californians. San Francisco: Lewis Putnam Publishing Company, 1926.
- Hammond, George P., Editor; The Larkin Papers. (7 volumes) Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1953.
- Hoffman, Ogden; Cases Determined in the District Court of California. San Francisco: Numa Hubert, 1862.
- James, William F. and George H. McMurry; History of San Jose, California. San Jose: A.H. Cawston, 1933.
- Jones, Herbert C.; The First Legislature of California. Sacramento: Senate and House of Representatives, 1949.

BIBLIOGRAPHY, CONTINUED:

- Kennedy, Helen W. and Veronica K. Kinzie; Vignettes of the Gardens of San Jose de Guadalupe. San Francisco: San Francisco Garden Club, 1938. (Reprinted 1976 by Smith and McKay Printing, San Jose.)
- Kirker, Harold; California's Architectural Frontier. Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith, 1973.
- Lyman, George D.; John Marsh, Pioneer. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947.
- Manley, William L. Death Valley in '49. San Jose: The Pacific Tree and Vine Company, 1894.
- McKittrick, Myrtle M.; Vallejo, Son of California. Portland: Binfords and Mort, 1944.
- McNamee, Mary Domenica, S.N.D. de N.; Light in the Valley: The Story of California's College of Notre Dame. Berkeley: Howell-North Books, 1967.
- Munro-Fraser, J.P.; History of Alameda County, California. Oakland: M.W. Wood, 1883.
- Munro-Fraser, J.P.; History of Santa Clara County, California. San Francisco: Alley and Bowen, 1881.
- Nasitir, Abraham P.; French Activities in California. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1943.
- Nasitir, Abraham P., Editor; Jacques A. Moerenhout, The Inside Story of the Gold Rush. San Francisco: California Historical Society, 1935.
- National Society of Colonial Dames; Early Mexican Ranchos in the San Francisco Bay Area. Unknown publisher, No date.
- Nunis, Doyce B., Editor; The California Diary of Faxon Dean Atherton. San Francisco: California Historical Society, 1964.
- Paul, Rodman W.; California Gold. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965.
- Pitt, Leonard; The Decline of the Californios. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970.
- Rambo, F. Ralph; Adventure Valley. San Jose: The Rosicrucian Press, 1970.
- Regnery, Dorothy; The Battle of Santa Clara. San Jose: Smith and McKay, 1978.
- Robinson, Fayette; California and It's Gold Regions... New York: Stringer and Townsend, 1849.

BIBLIOGRAPHY, CONTINUED:

Sawyer, Eugene T.; History of Santa Clara County, California. Los Angeles: Historic Record Company, 1922.

Severson, Thor; Sacramento: An Illustrated History 1839 to 1874. San Francisco: California Historical Society, 1973.

Solari, Agnes and Margaret Zaro; San Jose's St. Joseph's. San Jose: Mastergraphics, 1975.

Spearman, Arthur D., S.J.; The Five Franciscan Churches of Mission Santa Clara. Palo Alto: The National Press, 1963.

Street, Franklin; California in 1850... Cincinnati: R.E. Edwards and Company, 1851.

Stuart, Reginald and Grace Stuart; Corridor Country. Pleasanton: Amador-Livermore Valley Historical Society, 1966.

Sutter, John A.; New Helvetia Diary, A Record of Events Kept by John A. Sutter and His Clerks at New Helvetia, California, from September 9, 1840 to April 25, 1848. San Francisco: The Grabhorn Press, 1939.

Vallentin, Antonina; This I Saw: The Life and Times of Goya. New York: Random House, 1949.

Weber, Francis J.; The Writings of Francisco Garcia Diego y Moreno. Los Angeles: Timothy Cardinal Manning, Archbishop of Los Angeles, 1976.

Wilbur, Marguerite Eyer, Translator; Duflot du Mofras' Travels on the Pacific Coast. Santa Ana: The Fine Arts Press, 1937.

Wilkes, Charles, U.S.N.; From the Columbia River to the Sacramento. Oakland: Biobooks, 1958. (Reprint Edition)

Zollinger, J. Peter; Sutter; The Man and his Empire. Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1967.

MANUSCRIPTS:

Amador, José María; "Memoria Sobre de la Historia de California." Manuscript, 1877. The Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley.

Bernal, José Agustín to Antonio Suñol. Letter; San José: October 8, 1858. The Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley.

Bowman, Jacob N. and G.W. Hendry; "Spanish Mexican Adobes in the Nine Bay Area Counties." Manuscript, 1940. The Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley.

BIBLIOGRAPHY, CONTINUED:

- Bowman, Jacob N.; "Spanish Mexican Land grants of California." Manuscript, ca. 1940, The Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley.
- Forbes, James Alonzo to his niece (unnamed); Letter; Jolon: December 17, 1906. Saratoga Historical Society Collection.
- Healy, Charles; "Notebooks." 15 bound pencil notebooks covering Healy's Tenure as a County Surveyor. Office of the County Surveyor, County of Santa Clara, California.
- Kottinger, John W. to Agustín Bernal; Letter: San Francisco: May 4, 1858. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
- Osborne, Dr. Antrim E.; "Papers." Archives, University of Santa Clara.
- Marin, County Recorder's Office, "Book of Deeds, F."
- Pico, Pio; "Documentos para la historia de la familia Pico." Manuscript Collection, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
- Saint Joseph's Church, San José; "Book of Marriages, I."
- San Jose; Sanborn Company Bound Insurance Block Maps of San Jose, 1884. Collection of the San Jose Historical Museum.
- San Jose; "Spanish-Mexican Archives of the Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe, 1791-1853." Collection of the San Jose Historical Museum.
- San Jose; "Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe, 1825." (Map) Collection of Mr. Austen D. Warburton, Santa Clara.
- Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors; Road Files: "Sunol Street-1865." Office of the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.
- Santa Clara Mission; "Libro de Matrimonio, I." Archives, University of Santa Clara.
- Soberanes, Irene; "The Bernal Family in California: 1776-1954." The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
- Suñol, Antonio María to John Marsh; Letter: San José, March 25, 1845. California State Library, Sacramento.
- Suñol, Antonio María to Francisco Garcia Diego y Moreno; Letter: San José, November 17, 1842.
- Sutter, John A. to Antonio María Suñol; "Sutter-Suñol Correspondence." California State Library, Sacramento.

BIBLIOGRAPHY, CONTINUED:

United States of America; "Transcript of Case #181 N.D., Santa Teresa" and "Transcript of Case #263 N.D., Los Coches." United States Land Commission and U.S. District Court. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

JOURNALS, ARTICLES:

Borquist, Isabel; "The School Across the Tracks." California Today. San Jose: San Jose Mercury-News, September 30, 1973.

Broadbent, Sylvia; "Conflict at Monterey: Indian Horse Raiding, 1820-1850." Journal of California Anthropology: Riverside: Malki Museum; Spring, 1974. (Volume 1, Number 1.)

Clyman, James; "James Clyman: His Diaries and Reminiscences." California Historical Quarterly: San Francisco: California Historical Society; June, 1926. (Volume V, Number 2.)

Cosgrave, George; "James McHall Jones: The Judge Who Never Presided." California Historical Society Quarterly: San Francisco: California Historical Society, June, 1941. (Volume XX, Number 3.)

Hagemann, Herbert L.; "Abstract of Title: Rancho El Valle de San Jose." Pacific Historian: Stockton: University of the Pacific, May-August, 1965.

Hastings, Robert P.; "Rufus Allen Lockwood." California Historical Society Quarterly: San Francisco: California Historical Society, September, 1955. (Volume XXXIV, Number 3.)

Ogden, Adele; "Alfred Robinson, New England Merchant in Mexican California." California Historical Society Quarterly. San Francisco: California Historical Society, September, 1944. (Volume XXXIII, Number 3.)

NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS:

San Francisco Californian. May 29, 1848.

San José Semi-Weekly Tribune. March 9, 1855.

San José Mercury. March 23, 1865.

San José Weekly Mercury. January 27, 1881.

San José Daily Mercury. February 24, 1910.

San José Mercury-News. October 21, 1978.

BIBLIOGRAPHY, CONTINUED:

San Jose News? ca. 1926-1927; "Sunol's Adobe Ruin." Undated, unidentified news clipping. Frances L. Fox Collection.

? No Date; "First Brick House." Unidentified news clipping, Frances L. Fox Collection.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS:

The United States Vs. Andres Castellero, Transcript. San Francisco: 1856-1864.
Four Bound Volumes. Library, Society of California Pioneers, San Francisco.

INTERVIEWS:

Arbuckle, Clyde, San Jose City Historian.

Bruzzone, John A. Sr., Restorer, Roberto-Suñol Adobe.

Bohnett, Lew, Dismantled José Suñol-Pierre DeSaisset Adobe in 1954.

Dring, Harry, Maritime Historian, National Park Service

Fox, Frances L., Historian

Hagemann, Herbert L., Historian

Sanchez, Gilbert A., Architect-Planner. Restoration Architect, Roberto-Suñol Adobe.

Sunol, Clara, Descendant

Turek, Dolores Ramona Sainsevain, Descendant

Wulf, William A., Historian

The above named individuals were consulted and interviewed several times through a period of four years. The individual interviews cited in the text are identified by date, when and if possible. Some information was gained only through many separate discussions and interviews.



