

# The House That Vicente Built and Some Aptos History

by Allen Collins

In 1855, for his twentieth birthday, Vicente Castro's father gave him 700 acres of land north of today's Aptos Village. He built his first home on the southern tip of his land, between the steep banks of Trout and Valencia Creeks. He married Jesus Fuentes in 1858. She died of pneumonia in that home six years later, shortly after their third son was born. .

A few months before Vicente's second marriage, to Vicenta Pico in 1867, he started a long program of selling-off selected parcels of the land his parents had given him. A week after his second marriage, he purchased from his parents a seven plus acre apple orchard across the Coast Road (Soquel Drive) from today's Rancho Del Mar Shopping Center.

Vicenta Castro came from a huge socially and politically prominent Santa Clara County family. She and Vicente had six children, the first four were born in their home between Trout and Valencia Creeks.

In the middle 1870s, the Castros built a huge two-story home centered in their orchard, across the Coast road from the first Aptos school. This is our *House That Vicente Built*, the subject of this story, where the family lived for the next twelve years.

The story of that home, and of the various owners over the years, provide important insights into this history of the area. The house is occupied and maintained today (1994) as a park-like gem hidden in a vibrant commercial section of Aptos.

## Who was Vicente Castro?

Vicente Castro's great-grandfather, Joaquín Ysidro Castro, was one of the twenty-eight, soldiers of the Spanish Army who trekked, with his wife and eight children, from Tubac, Mexico, to San Francisco, California, in 1776. Joaquín was part of the historically famous Anza Party, 240 brave souls, determined to settle Alta California.

Vicente's grandfather, José Joaquín Castro, was five or six years old when he trekked with his parents to California in 1776. José Joaquin was granted Rancho San Andres in 1833, a Mexican land grant of nearly 9,000-acres along the Santa Cruz County coast extending from north of La Selva Beach to near Watsonville.

Vicente's parents were Don Rafael de Jesus and Soledad (Cota) Castro. Rafael was granted a 6,686-acre spread in 1833 as a reward for military and political services rendered to the Mexican Government. It extended from today's Cabrillo College to (almost) La Selva Beach, and averaged about 2.5-miles inland from the coastline. It became known as Rancho Aptos, and was patented by the United States Government in 1860.

Rafael and Soledad were land rich, and became prominent as shrewd politicians and cattle ranchers in what became Santa Cruz County. Their ranch home was a huge two-story hacienda built in 1840 on a ridge-top off Wharf Road, just a few hundred yards south of today's Rancho Del Mar Shopping Center, on Soquel Drive, Aptos. The hacienda burned to the ground in 1920, and today's

freeway (California Highway 1) was cut through the site in 1948.

Rafael and Soledad raised ten children. It was family policy to gift-deed a significant portion of the Rancho to each of their children when they matured, married, or had their first baby, whichever came first.

Because of this policy, the senior Castros gift-deeded to their son Vicente about 700-acres of land in 1855 for love and affection. This land was called the *potrero*, Spanish for pasture or cattle ground, or grassland. Vicente was the eighth child, single, age twenty, and this was a birthday present. The land was a rough triangle, bounded by *Canada de la Novillos* (later called Bernal Creek, now Trout Gulch) to the west, the *Anoyo del Chino* (Valencia Creek) to the east, and the *Soquel Augmentation Rancho* to the north.

### Vicente's Adventures

Vicente was twenty-three when he married Maria Refugia de Jesus Fuentes (known as Jesus) in December 1858, in Santa Cruz. Their home was at the extreme southern end of his 700-acre ranch, within the vertex of his *triangle*, at the junction of Trout and Valencia creeks — at the southern tip of today's Valencia Elementary School yard. Over short but steep trails they could bucket domestic water from either creek. Conveniently, they were just across Trout Gulch from Vicente's sisters, Antonia Bernal and Augustia Arano, and across Valencia Creek from his sister Maria de Los Angeles Valencia.

Trout and Valencia Creeks, in the Aptos area, flow in canyons forty to fifty-feet deep, with very steep sides. Foot paths and horse trails crossing these canyons were possible and prevalent, but wagon or buggy roads were impossible and bridges were few and far between. The main access to Vicente's home was a wagon road along the top of the east bluff of Trout Creek. It crossed the gulch three-quarters-of-a-mile upstream of

Aptos Village. A round-trip to the Village for a sack of flour was one-and-a-half miles.

Vicente and Jesus had three boys: Audel, Rudolph, and Albert. Albert died in infancy. Jesus died October 5, 1864 (age 25) of pneumonia, not long after her son Albert was born. She was buried in Holy Cross Cemetery, Santa Cruz; the burial is recorded, but the grave is not marked.

**V**icente was thirty-one when he married Vicenta Adalayda Pico in San Jose in June 1867. Vicenta was one of eight children of Antonio Maria Pico and María Lutgarda de Pilar Bernal, both very prominent and important families in city (San Jose), county (Santa Clara), and state business and politics.

Vicenta's father, Antonio María Pico, had been Mayor of San Jose in 1833, a co-grantee of Valle de San Jose Rancho in 1839 and Rancho Pescadero in 1843, a delegate to the California Constitutional Convention in 1849, the first Lt. Governor of California, a judge of the California Supreme Court, and was appointed by President Lincoln as the Registrar of the U. S. Land Office in Los Angeles in 1861. Pio Pico, Vicenta's first cousin, once removed, was Governor of California twice: for three-months in 1832, and for the duration of the Mexican regime, from 1845 to 1848.

Vicenta's mother, Lutgarda Pilar Bernal was a daughter of Jose Joaquin Bernal and Josepha Sanchez, grantees of the 10,000-acre Rancho Santa Teresa in Santa Clara County.

At some time before February, 1867, Vicente planted an apple orchard and built a small barn, on 7.5 acres of land belonging to his parents. In February 1867, he bought this land from his parents for \$500. The land description in the deed of sale defines the boundaries of Vicente's Orchard. The site was on the north side of the Coast Road (Soquel Drive), across from today's Rancho Del Mar shopping Center.

Some months before his second marriage, a week before buying his orchard, Vicente started selling-off selected parcels of the 700-acres that his parents had gift-deeded to him twelve years before. His first sale was 120-acres, for \$600, in February 1867, to Edward (“Ned”) Porter, a prominent storekeeper and wheeler-dealer in Soquel and a member of a prestigious family from Massachusetts that will enter our story in important ways later on. And then, he sold 348-acres for \$5,500 in November 1872, to Claus Spreckels, the “Sugar King” from San Francisco, whose families and business interests would make important historical impacts on our Central Coast for the next fifty years.

Vicente was a skilled and enthusiastic cattle rancher in constant demand as a “contractor” for peak-load ranch services for others in and out of the County (round-ups, branding, dehorning, castrating, driving to market, etc.). He nurtured a profitable orchard, had money from land sales, and his family was growing.

Vicente and Vicenta, raised six children: Catherine, Aurora, Albert, Rosamel, Emilie, and Ana. Rosamel was born in San Juan Bautista, the others in Aptos. In addition, the Castros raised Juan Castaveja, an Indian orphan, and kept a mature Indian, named Manuel, as a live-in ranch-hand for many years.

**H**e and Vicenta started dreaming of a new, larger, more convenient home. They built it in the middle of their orchard, across the Coast Road from the first Aptos school, which made its location convenient for their children. It is not clear when they started or finished construction, but there are reports that a barn in their orchard was used as a school in 1870, until the first school was built in 1871. It is probable that Vicente and his family moved into their new home in 1875 or 1876. It is also reported that the upstairs of the Castro home was used as an overflow classroom when the

first school became overcrowded, but the year of this is not known.

The new two-story home was a masterpiece in its day, and it is, in 1994, beautifully restored, lived in, and maintained as an historic attraction. The original structure was well-built, withstanding both the 1906 and 1989 earthquakes with little or no damage.

In 1872, Claus Spreckels, the fabulously rich “Sugar King” from San Francisco, purchased 2,400-acres from Rafael, Vicente’s father, leaving him and his wife their 15-acre homesite and an 83-acre strip near today’s Cabrillo College. And then, four months later, he purchased an additional 100-acres of ranch land for \$4,500 from Maria Castro Valencia Hipolito, and an additional 348±-acres of ranch land for \$5,500 from Vicente Castro.

Spreckels’ final purchase was in 1878. When, almost as a favor to Castro, he bought Vicente’s old 7.3±-acre homesite at the junction of Trout and Valencia Creeks for \$425. With that sale, Vicente and Vicenta’s only remaining property in Santa Cruz County was their home orchard (now 9.944-acres). They had sold every square inch of the 700-acres that Vicente had received as a gift from his parents in 1855, twenty-three years before.

The loss of these family lands was, understandably, disturbing to Vicente and his brothers and sisters. Other events of the 1870s and 1880s further disturbed the Castro clan. Their life-styles, their attitudes, and the general tranquil mode of their ranching all changed.

Claus Spreckels moved rapidly. He brought Peter Larsen from San Francisco to oversee the building of a massive residential “resort” and ranch headquarters. This was located just south of Aptos Village, at a site near today’s Redwood Village. Larsen, with whom Spreckels placed great trust and authority, stayed on for over thirty years to manage the Spreckels ranch operations. He

took away many of the traditional activities that the Castro boys had enjoyed.

Claus Spreckels joined with Frederick Hihn, the prominent entrepreneur of Santa Cruz, to promote the County's first direct railroad connection to the main Southern Pacific line at Pajaro Junction. The first through train passed Aptos Village in 1876. The track was narrow-gauge, but was converted to broad-gauge by the Southern Pacific in 1882-1883.

Anticipating the railroad, Hihn bought vast tracts of virgin redwood timber in the Valencia Creek watershed, built a narrow-gauge railroad from Aptos Village into that watershed, and built a sizable sawmill and lumber camp (Valencia) at its head. His Valencia operations brought hordes of "foreigners" into the area, and boomed for twenty years.

In 1882, the Southern Pacific Railroad and the Lorna Prieta Lumber Company (successor to the Watsonville Mill & Lumber Co.) started building a broad-gauge railroad from Aptos Village into the Aptos Creek watershed, through the Spreckels' ranch. This was the precursor of massive logging-saw milling operations that ensued from 1884 through 1900, bringing more and more "foreigners" into the area.

As a result of these changes, Aptos Village became a bee-hive of activity, a rough and tumble lumber town. There were three "major" hotels, within a block of each other, in the Village: the Bay View (the Arano family), the Ocean House (the Thurwachter family), and the Live Oak House (the Walsh family). A fourth hotel overlooked the mouth of the Aptos Creek, the Aptos Hotel (the Spreckels family). There were at least eight saloons in the Village center, all crowded on Saturday nights.

### **Influence of Claus Mangels**

In 1884 and 1886, Claus Mangels, a business partner of Claus Spreckels, purchased 540+ acres of the Aptos Rancho from his partner.

The two had grown up together in Lamstedt, Germany, immigrated together in 1846, and supported each other in the sugar industry on a career basis. Mangels' land was located on both sides of Aptos Creek, from the Village to the boundary of the Soquel Augmentation Rancho (today's Forest of Nisene Marks State Park). The Lorna Prieta railroad ran through it. Vicente Castro's homesite and apple orchard was sandwiched between the Coast Road (Soquel Drive) and the Mangels' Ranch.

The Mangels built a huge ranch home, almost an exact duplicate of the Spreckels mansion built ten years before, and a ranch complex about a mile inland from the Village. It was commissioned in 1888. Today (1994) it is a "bed and breakfast" hotel, The Mangels House.

All of this activity in and around Aptos may have been attractive to the business interests of the Spreckels and Mangels families. Claus Spreckels was an important influence from the beginning, and Claus Mangels entered the scene at the peak of the boom. On the other hand, it was hard for the pioneer ranchers in the area to understand, adjust to, or accept. Some pioneers liquidated their holdings and left the area, including Vicente and Vicenta Castro, and others died here.

Over the years, branches of the Castro family, early settlers of Aptos, and branches of the Porter family, natives of Massachusetts, early settlers of Soquel, built up a *rapport* that was mutually useful and respected.

John Thomas Porter, a former Santa Cruz County Sheriff (1856-1860) and Monterey Port Collector (1860-1870), later an entrepreneur operating out of Pajaro with financial interests in the Lorna Prieta Lumber Co. and Watsonville banks, owner of vast ranch lands along the Central Coast, in 1880 took Vicente Castro as a partner in owning and operating the 1,628.7-acre Rancho Los Pinacates in San Benito County.

As has been mentioned, Vicente Castro was highly respected as a skilled

cattleman. John T. Porter was not. With ownership interest in Rancho Los Pinacates, Vicente traveled back and forth between Aptos and San Juan Bautista to oversee and manage those operations.

**P**orter had every-day business contacts with management people of the Southern Pacific Railroad, who served the Loma Prieta Lumber Company in the Aptos Creek watershed. Accordingly, he was quite aware of the plan to build a coastal railroad to Southern California, and he hoped the Loma Prieta Lumber Co. would be called upon to supply the thousands of redwood ties that would be required.

Through his close association with Porter, Vicente learned that prime ranch land was “dirt cheap” in the foothills east of Santa Maria, California; there were not yet railroads or seaports in the area for shipping products, and the population was thin.

Restless, and fed-up with developments in the Aptos area, uninterested in logging, sawmilling, and lumber, Vicente got thinking about that “dirt cheap” ranch land in the Santa Maria area. In May 1887, he deeded his ownership in Rancho Los Pinacates to John T. Porter for an undisclosed amount. Thirteen days later, on May 25, he purchased 850 undeveloped acres of Rancho Tepusquet, east of Santa Maria, \$2,000. It was a hard four-day horseback ride from Aptos to Santa Maria, but Vicente was not one to get “saddle sore”!

Returning to Aptos, Vicente approached Claus Mangels, offering his home and orchard for sale. This would provide a short, direct access from the Coast Road (Soquel Drive) to Mangels’ inland ranch, which was building.

A deal was struck. Vicente sold the last of his Aptos properties to Claus Mangels for \$1,000 (as cited in the newspaper). The deed was signed on August 26, 1887. To celebrate, Vicente hosted a banquet the following evening for three-hundred of his

friends in Claus Spreckel’s very fashionable Aptos Hotel, located overlooking the Aptos Lagoon and Monterey Bay. The press reported, erroneously, that Vicente was moving his family to San Luis Obispo: Vicenta, his wife, six children, Juan, an Indian orphan, and Manuel, an Indian ranch-hand. Actually, they moved to the Santa Maria area!

At about the same time, John T. Porter (of Pajaro) and Thomas A. Bishop (of San Francisco) joined hands to purchase the 35,486-acre rancho Sisquoc in Santa Barbara County from Lucy Stone, who had inherited a half-interest from her father, and a man named Harris, who had acquired a half-interest from Lucy’s brother. Sometime later, Porter and Bishop sold the mineral rights to W. H. Crocker (the South-Pacific family), thus to finance a significant portion of the land purchase, and they expanded the ranch to 42,000-acres. Rancho Sisquoc was an established ranch, immediately adjacent to the undeveloped land Vicente Castro had purchased.

Porter and Bishop dreamed of enhanced land values when the railroad would come through the area, and the thousands of redwood ties that would come from the Loma Prieta Lumber Co. Net proceeds from managed cattle ranching would be a plus.

The Southern Pacific (Crocker) had visions of exploiting the asphaltic materials (*brea*) that were prevalent on the surface in the Sisquoc area, the mineral rights. They would receive royalties from the miners, and they would haul the products to the cities on their railroad, for a price. On top, their railroad would open-up vast coastal areas for productive development.

**I**t was sensible and easy for Porter to recruit his erstwhile friend and partner, Vicente Castro, to become “mayor-domo” of Rancho Sisquoc; he and his family could move into an established rancho next door to his own undeveloped acreage and combine the two operations. One wonders if all of this was not pre-planned, before any

land transactions took place! In any event, some years later Vicente built his own home on his own ranch, and by 1903, Bob Easton, Porter's nephew, had taken over as mayor-domo of Rancho Sisquoc.

Vicenta died in their home in January 1915, at 70. Vicente remained on the ranch, but died while visiting his daughter, Catarina Cuesta, in Los Angeles in May 1925, at 90. Both are in the Santa Maria Cemetery.

Vicente's Rancho Tepusquet home is still in the Castro family in 1994. The Rancho Sisquoc complex was in the Porter family into 1927, and was in the Flood family in 1983.

### **The Mangels / Mangels Estate Years, 1887 to 1927**

With his purchase in 1887 of Vicente Castro's home and orchard in Aptos, Claus Mangels had a short, direct access corridor to his inland ranch replacing the longer wagon road from Aptos Village, which followed Aptos Creek, passed under the Lorna Prieta railroad trestle over Mangels Creek, and climbed steeply to the ranch home. The railroad itself passed through the ranch only a few hundred yards below the barn yards, today's Aptos Creek Road.

Also, of course, he had Vicente's home, which was handy and useful while construction was underway at his ranch. He built a new family mansion, which was virtually a duplicate of the Spreckels' mansion built ten years before off the Coast Road, two miles south of Aptos Village. The barns, stables, milking sheds, chicken houses, pig pens, corrals, fences, vegetable gardens, orchard, etc., were commissioned by the Mangels family in an 1888 ceremony.

Neither the Spreckels nor the Mangels considered their Aptos ranch homes to be their principal residences. Their permanent homes and their business offices were in San Francisco. The Aptos homes and ranches were retreats for themselves, their families, and friends. Everyday ranch operations were turned over to trusted managers. Their main

business was growing sugar on their cane plantations in Hawaii, transporting it by their Oceanic Steamship Company, refining the sugar on the mainland, and later, sugar-beet farming and refining in the Pajaro and Salinas valleys. They had interconnecting rail and shipping facilities at Moss Landing. In comparison to these enterprises, the Aptos ranches were financially insignificant and unimportant.

**T**he Mangels' mansion on the ranch became known as the "big house" and became the social center for all the related families and their guests for many years. That home could sleep twenty-three people in comfort. A tennis court, and an out-door tea-court were added a little later, and of course there were always horses to ride and the Aptos beach was handy. It was truly a family resort.

There was some friendly social overlap between the Spreckels families in their mansion and the Mangels families in their mansion, three miles apart. It was, however, unusual for the Spreckels and the Mangels to be in Aptos at the same time because of business demands in San Francisco, and travel time.

In 1872 when Spreckels bought Rancho Aptos, it was a two-day buggy trip from San Francisco. The first railroad from San Francisco, in 1876, connecting at the Southern Pacific's depot at Pajaro Junction, and the South Pacific Coast Railroad in 1880, routed from the Alameda Ferry Terminal to Santa Cruz, passing through the Santa Cruz Mountains above Los Gatos, helped shorten the travel time. By the early 1920s, reasonably dependable automobiles and improved roads made the trip quite easy. Thereafter, the descendent families (Mangels, Tillman, Hueter, Mertz, Van Eck, Reed, etc.) and their guests were using the Aptos "retreat" more often. Mothers and their children would spend entire summers between school-terms vacationing at the ranch.

Because the “big house” was so comfortable and handy as a recreation spot for family gatherings, the old Vicente Castro home in the orchard was used less and less. It was vacant most of the time and neglected. It deteriorated, shamefully, particularly the exterior.

Claus Mangels died in San Francisco in April 1891. In his Will, he named his wife Emma, his son John Henry, and his two sons-in-law (Frederick Tillman, Jr., and Ernest L. Hueter) as joint Executors of his vast estate, which included (as a very small part) the orchard home and property that had belonged to Vicente and Vicenta Castro. The executors acted promptly to manage the estate.

As an aside, Claus Spreckels died in San Francisco, the day after Christmas, 1908, age 80. His estate reverted to the San Christina Investment Company, to be managed by two of his sons. They operated Spreckels’ Aptos Ranch, almost as a patriotic duty during World War I, until 1922 when they sold it to developers.

In 1910, the Mangels Estate Company was formed, with Frederick Tillman, Jr., as President, and Ernest L. Hueter as Secretary. Their plan was to identify, assemble, and hold all the estate assets in one entity. This was accomplished by early 1911, when all the heirs, deeded their interests to the Company.

Sometime during 1920 or 1921, Fred A. Tillman replaced his father, Frederick Tillman, Jr., as President of the Mangels Estate Company, and Oscar M. Hueter replaced his father, Ernest L. Hueter, as its Secretary.

In 1927, the Company deeded specific parcels of the Mangels Ranch to each of the heirs (or their survivors) equitably in accordance with their inherited interests. This terminated the primary function of the Mangels Estate Company.

The Company deeded to Fred A. Tillman the old Vicente Castro home and orchard, together with some other nearby parcels, including today’s Aptos Village

Community park. The old home, by this time –after forty-years of neglect, was in horrible condition, inside and out.

### **The Tillman Years – 1927 – 1941**

The Tillman family was a prominent San Francisco name.

Frederick Tillman Sr. and his wife, Anna Dickel, natives of Bremen, Germany, immigrated to the U. S. in 1849 by way of the sea-route around Cape Horn. They established a wholesale tea, coffee, and spice company in San Francisco, that expanded exponentially over the years into processed foods, the precursor of the famous Del Monte label. He retired in 1920, and returned to Germany, where he died.

Their son, Frederick Tillman, Jr., was born in February 1860, in San Francisco. He was sent to school in Germany at age six. Returning in 1876, he joined the family business. He married Emma Maria Mangels in 1888 (he was twenty-eight, she was twenty-five) and he became President of the Mangels Estate Company in 1895, and Chairman of the Board in 1920, and they had two children: Agnes (b. 1888), who married Jan Carel van Panthaleon Baron van Eck (a Dutchman, later President of Shell Oil Company in the U.S., then a Managing Director of The Royal Dutch Shell Companies, International); and, Frederick Adolphus Tillman (b. 1890), who never married.

Frederick Jr. and Emma retired gradually right after the First World War, turning the family businesses over to their son Fred A. Tillman, who was about thirty. In retirement, Frederick Jr. became fanatically involved in religion, philosophy, rare books, music and art. After leaving the old family home (2000 Washington Street, San Francisco), he and Emma lived for a while in the Del Monte Lodge (Carmel), the Pacific Coast Club (San Francisco), and finally at the Mark Hopkins Hotel, where he died on August, 1942.

Fred A. Tilman replaced his father as President of the Mangels-Estate Company in 1921. Now, with the added burden of the vast array of family businesses to manage, the responsibilities were heavy for a young man in his thirtys.

He finalized the business of the Mangels Estate Company in 1927 when the assets were deeded cleanly to the heirs, or their survivors. This gave him an undivided ownership of the old home (now dilapidated) and orchard of Vicente Castro, along with some nearby parcels, including today's Aptos Village Community Park.

Three years later, in the early 1930s, he sold-out the vast family businesses, completely. He was now thirty-nine years old. Accordingly, at the bottom of the Great Depression, his work in San Francisco had tapered-off to nearly nothing. He decided he would resurrect, expand, and modernize the old Castro home in Aptos orchard. He designed the project in his mind and on paper, he moved to Aptos, and worked along side his hired carpenter to complete the project. They added additional space, decks, electrical, plumbing, central heat, insulation, landscaping, and many gallons of paint. They did a marvelous job.

**F**red Tillman kept an apartment in San Francisco for his convenience, but he lived for ten years (1932 – 1942) in his updated, Aptos home, alone, he never married. He used Aptos extensively as a “retreat” and social center for his bay-area and local friends. He became known as a master host. Although he provided for a full-time yard man to mind the orchard and to take the lead with heavy work, he maintained the house and gardens himself, keeping it all as a showplace, until the novelty wore off and/or the work load became too much.

He sold the whole residential park in 1942 to Montgomery and Ruth Hawks for \$8,500 and moved to a smaller home up the hill behind the Mangels mansion. Some time

after that, he moved to Palm Springs, where, at 81, he died in May 1972.

### **The Hawks' Year (less than a year, 50 weeks, 1941-1942)**

The short tenure of Montgomery W. and Ruth M. (Mills-Plumb) Hawks as owners of this historic home was, no doubt, caused by the events of World War II. Information about them, since they didn't establish much of a presence in Aptos, has been difficult to assemble.

Fred A. Tillman, as Grantor, deeded the historic Castro home and orchard to Montgomery and Ruth Hawks in December 1941. The price was \$8,500. The Hawks signed a Deed of Trust acknowledging the loan of \$7,750 from Fred A. Tillman (91% of the purchase price), which mortgaged the property back to Tillman. Montgomery Hawks' signature on that Deed was notarized in Washington, D. C., in December 1941. Ruth's signature was notarized ten days later in San Francisco. The Deed was recorded in Santa Cruz County on February 2, 1942, fifty-seven days after Pearl Harbor.

There is no clear evidence to suggest that the Hawks ever lived in the home.

Karl Mertz, a descendant of the Mangels-Hueter families, who lives on the Mangels Ranch today (1994), seems to remember that Montgomery Hawks was a private pilot, and was a personal friend of Fred A. Tillman. Mertz believes that Hawks flew the plane from which some early, unsigned and undated, aerial photos were taken of the Mangels Ranch.

Montgomery Hawks graduated with a degree in civil engineering from UC-Berkeley with the class of 1919; however, the UC Alumni Association lost track of him after that. If Montgomery had been a licensed pilot, it might be that he was called to Washington, D.C., leaving Ruth in San Francisco. He was about 46 years old in 1941, perhaps too old to be an active military pilot, but not too old to be an instructor, or some equivalent.



Montgomery and Ruth Hawks sold their Aptos home to Bartley C. and Anna Gertrude (Bosworth) Crum for \$10,000 in October 1942, fifty-weeks after they had acquired it. The Grant Deed was notarized by the Hawks in San Francisco and recorded in Santa Cruz.

Subsequently, the Hawks lived in San Jose (1940s) where he was Treasurer and General Manager of Insu-Lava Products Company, brick manufacturers. Ten years later they were living in Los Gatos where he was a realtor with Shelley-Williams Associates in Saratoga.

In a tragic highway accident near Point Lobos, on the night of February 22, 1957, Ruth was killed by a falling tree during a storm. Montgomery remarried, and they lived in Saratoga. State records show that Montgomery died in Los Angeles County in 1977, about eighty-two years old.

### **The Crum Years (1942-1952)**

The principal residence of Bartley Cavanaugh “Bart” Crum, an attorney, and his wife Gertrude Bosworth Crum, was in Berkeley until 1942, in San Francisco until 1948, and in New York City thereafter. Bart commuted to offices in San Francisco (the Crocker Building in the 1930s, the Russ Building in the 40s) by ferryboat until the Bay Bridge was completed in 1936, and then by train (across the bridge) until they moved to the City.

The Crums purchased the old Vicente Castro estate from the Hawks in October, 1942, for \$10,000. They wanted a country place as a second home where they could garden and nurture an orchard, where their two small children would have unique recreational opportunities, where they could relax away from the big City-swirl, think, write, and entertain local and out-of-town friends comfortably.

**W**ithin the context of all the wartime activity, the Aptos residence offered the solitude the Crums sought. It was a perfect

place for Bart; he could do his thinking, prepare his legal presentations, and do his writing far more effectively in the quiet of his orchard home than in a tumultuous wartime office in downtown San Francisco.

Both Bart and Gertrude Crum distinguished themselves professionally, nationally and internationally. They did much of their important work in the house Vicente Castro built, here in Aptos.

Bart Crum was raised in Sacramento. At UC-Berkeley, he was an extremely active and serious-minded student, class of 1923. He majored in jurisprudence, lived in and was active in Kappa Alpha (social) fraternity, was prominent in Phi Delta Epsilon (journalism honors), was a member of Phi Phi (national inter-fraternity honors society), was on the staff of the *Daily Californian* and the *Pelican* (the monthly humor magazine). He was the elected President of the English Club his senior year.

Early in his career, as a corporation lawyer, Crum became prominent serving such clients as Hearst Publishing, Zellerbach, Pepsi-Cola, Sara Lee Foods, etc. His political activism led to the vice-presidency of the Lawyers Guild of San Francisco. In that capacity he acted as one of the attorneys fighting the deportation of Harry Bridges, the President of the International Longshore’s & Warehousemen’s Union (ILWU).

In 1946, President Harry Truman appointed Bart Crum to the six-man Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry into Palestine (which investigated the many problems of resettling 100,000 Jewish survivors of the World War II concentration camps in Europe.) He served faithfully on that assignment for many months, in the Middle East and Europe. Much of his book, *Behind the Silken Curtain*, which reported on his experiences during that service, was written in Aptos. He was a speech writer for Wendell Willke during his two candidacies for president, 1940 and 1944, and Crum managed his two California campaigns. In 1947, he was

on the team of lawyers who defended the so-called "Hollywood Nineteen," those screenwriters and directors who were blacklisted for refusing to divulge their political beliefs before the House Un-American Activities Committee. In 1953, Bart negotiated Rita Hayworth's \$1,000,000 divorce settlement from Shah Aly Kahn.

Late in 1948 Bart Crum had an opportunity to exercise his interest in journalism. He and Joseph Barnes, foreign editor of New York's *Herald Tribune*, purchased the radical newspaper *PM* from Marshall Field. Crum was Publisher, Barnes was editor. This venture caused the Crums to move from San Francisco to Manhattan. The paper folded in 1949.

While living in the Bay Area, the Crum family commuted virtually every weekend to Aptos, especially during their children's school terms. From 1942 through 1951 the family spent every summer in Aptos, and they traveled from New York during the summers of 1949, 1950, and 1951.

**A**nna Gertrude Bosworth was a native of San Rafael, but was raised in Piedmont. She attended UC-Berkeley through the academic year 1922 – 23, where she had been a Pi Beta Phi (social sorority). In the fall of 1923, which was to be her senior year at UC-Berkeley, she took a leave of absence to attend and graduate from the fashionable Cardon Bleu Cooking School in Paris. Later during the 1920s, she became a reporter for the *Call Bulletin* in San Francisco. She and Bart Crum married in 1929. In the late 1930s, she wrote the novel *Strumpet Wind*, a murder mystery. In the early 1960s, as a recent widow in New York, Gertrude created Bloomingdale's Gourmet Shop, and published *Menus by Mail*, which had subscribers all over the country, including Jackie Kennedy Onassis. Her cookbook *World of Menus & Recipes*, was published in 1970. It was named "cookbook of the year" by the *New York Times*. During all of this Gertrude found time to raise two children.

The Crums enjoyed entertaining local and out-of-town friends in their Aptos retreat, and they were good at it. Their daughter, Patricia Bosworth Crum, then a child, remembers such house guests as Paul Smith, editor then of the *San Francisco Chronicle*; Russ Davenport, an intimate of Wendell Willke and editor of *Fortune Magazine*, Harry Bridges, President of the ILWU, Anne Halprin, a renowned professional dancer; and Tommy Church, the landscape architect who designed the formal gardens of the Crums and was given the credit for the landscaping at Hollins House and other significant homes in the Pasatiempo district of Santa Cruz.

Their son, Bartley C. Crum, Jr., died in 1953. Their daughter, Patricia Bosworth Crum Arrighi, now (1994) a widow living in Manhattan, is a writer/editor. Using the name Patricia Bosworth, she has written the biographies of Montgomery Clift, the actor, and of Diane Arbus, the photographer. Currently, she is completing the memoirs of her family, to be published by Simon & Shuster. Some of that book will be set in Aptos.

Part of her story undoubtedly will relate the coincidences of her parents. Her mother, Gertrude Bosworth as a student at UC-Berkeley, and Bernice Huggins were sorority sisters and became life-long best friends. Patricia's father and Thomas B. Porter of Watsonville were students at UC-Berkeley, classes of 1923 and 1924 respectively. Gertrude Bosworth married Bart Crum, and they settled in Berkeley, San Francisco, Aptos, and New York. Bernice Huggins married Tom Porter, and they settled in Watsonville. These two couples double-dated at UC-Berkeley, and they continued to be close friends socially the rest of their lives. Bernice Huggins and Gertrude Bosworth were in Pi Beta Phi, and Bart Crum was Kappa Alpha. The fraternity house was just a few doors from the sorority house, on the same side of Piedmont Avenue. Is it any wonder that the three knew each other on campus?

The now famous Aptos home was particularly attractive to the Crums because they would be near the Porters in Watsonville. The Crum's daughter (Patricia) and the Porter's daughter (Diane) were near the same age. They played together as children in Aptos and Watsonville, and they, too, became life-long friends.

Gertrude's older brother, Carl Bosworth, was a realtor in Watsonville in the 1940s and 1950s. He knew the Porters, and he knew the Castro house. He was equipped to look after it when the Crums were away.

The house had been built by Vicente Castro in 1875. He had been a ranch manager for, and a close friend of, the Porter family from the early 1870s (San Juan Bautista) to the early 1920s (Rancho Sisquoc, Santa Barbara County).

### **The Miller Heritage and the Present Condition (1952 – 1994+)**

After about ten years, on August 1952, the Crums sold the total residential complex to Joseph Patrick Miller and Dorothy E. Miller, of San Jose, for \$20,000. Dr. Miller was a dentist, a native of Minnesota, a graduate of the Loyola University School of Dentistry. He practiced in Southern California, then for seven years in San Jose before establishing an office in Santa Cruz in 1953. Dorothy, his wife, was his Dental Assistant, off and on. The doctor retired in 1971 and died in 1976 at age 81, leaving Dorothy and two sons, John Anthony and Joseph.

Dr. Miller's Santa Cruz office was on the southeast corner of Cedar and Elm Streets, 418 Cedar Street. The building, its porches and yards, comprise today's popular Cafe Pergolesi, which serves as a social center for light fare, indoors and out, as did the famous pre-1989-earthquake Cooper House (at Pacific and Cooper streets).

The "**DR. MILLER'S**" signs, in bold block letters, six-feet high, continue to appear on both faces of the building and are repainted as needed to retain the distinctive

appearance of his years there. The signs are useful attractions for today's business and inspire interesting historical inquiries.

When the Millers bought it, the Castro home was quite rundown from years of neglect. Doctor Miller commuted from San Jose to his Santa Cruz office for two months while contractors modernized the kitchen, the heating plant, the electric and plumbing systems, and painted every square inch, inside and out.

The Millers moved in after the renovations were completed. They then moved the woodshed that was near the house to the creekside, closed it in and converted it to a guest house. Today (1994), it is a rental, and its log construction with natural finish makes it an interesting structure. Where the wood-shed had been, they built a detached garage building, with storage rooms. Next, they built four relatively small but neat rental units in a circle, around the main house; three out front, one in back. An old tool shed, or shop, believed to date to Vicente Castro's time, had been converted by Fred Tillman to a caretaker's cabin, and it was used for that purpose into the 1950s. That cabin, at the extreme south end of the complex, has now been refurbished nicely into an attractive but small rental home. It is the sixth rental unit in the complex.

Dorothy Miller continues to live in the original home. Her son John Anthony Miller, unmarried, lives in one of the rentals. The other son, Joseph, lives in Southern California with his family.

Some years ago, the Millers subdivided a two-hundred-foot wide strip of land out in front of their home, along the east side of Soquel Drive, for commercial development. That strip is now totally built-out, and protects and enhances the charm and privacy of the residential conclave. Leases on those properties provide significant income for the Miller family.

The rear of the residential complex is unencumbered, it looks down on Aptos

Creek. Nothing but a few scraggly apple trees are left of the original orchard, but the huge redwoods behind the main house create a perfect backdrop for the beautifully maintained residential conclave. The entire complex is a privately-owned historical gem at the edge of today's most vibrant mid-county commercial center.

Ownership of the residential park, and the three commercial parcels is vested in the Miller Family Trust, John Anthony Miller, Trustee.

Currently (1994), the adjacent plot to the northeast is being developed as a complex of twenty-eight townhouses, with its own tennis court, and separate road access from Soquel Drive (Aptos Rancho Road).

### **Epilogue - An Historical perspective**

Looking toward the past, it is interesting to note that only two families considered this historic home to be their principal residence – the first family and the last—the Castros and the Millers. Each of the others treated it as a second home, a vacation spot, or a retreat.

Without exception, ownership has been held by prominent families, with professional or business distinction in local, county, state, national, or international activity.

The current owners, the Miller family, hold the record for continuity. Dorothy Miller has lived in and nurtured the property for forty-two years, to date, and has maintained it proudly and meticulously as an historical park for the family's pleasure and for the benefit of the community.

Let us hope that future owners and residents of this historic Castro home will be as respectful and caring of its heritage as the Millers have been.