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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

MAR 09 1993

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16).

1. Name of Property

historic name Las Flores Estancia
other names/site number CA-SDi-812 H, San Diego Museum of Man W-4755
Huisme, Rancho de San Pedro, Rancho de Las Flores

2. Location

street & number Intersection of Pulgas Road and Stuart Mesa Road
city, town Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base
state CA code 06 county San Diego code 073 zip code 92055-5001

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: public-Federal (XX)
Category of Property: site (XX)
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 1, Noncontributing 0, Total 1

Name of related multiple property listing:
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria.
Signature of certifying official: John W. ... Federal Reserve Officer
Date: 3/31/93
State or Federal agency and bureau: U.S. Department of the Navy

In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting or other official: ...
Date: 1/21/93
State or Federal agency and bureau: Office of Historic Preservation, California Department of Parks and Recreation

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
[X] entered in the National Register.
Signature of the Keeper: Janet E. ...
Date of Action: 5-20-93

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Multiple dwelling

Recreation/Outdoor Recreation

Domestic/Camp

Religion/Religious facility

Agriculture/Agricultural field, animal facility processing

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Colonial/Spanish Colonial

foundation Stone

walls Adobe

roof _____

other Terra Cotta

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Introduction

The Las Flores *estancia* is a Mission Period compound sitting on a prehistoric/ethnohistoric Indian midden. The site was first occupied by prehistoric Indians and then an ethnohistoric Luiseño village. In the Spanish Period it became a Rancho of Mission San Luis Rey, and then appears to have expanded to an *estancia* or *rancho* with upgraded chapel and providing occasional liturgical services. All evidence, and prevailing historical opinion, indicate the facility never attained the status of asistencia or mission outpost that provided full liturgical services. It became an Indian Pueblo in the Mexican Period during the process of mission secularization. Finally it was absorbed by Pio and Andrés Pico into the Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores. The Pueblo inhabitants continued to reside at the compound but eventually abandoned it by the time the Rancho came into the possession of Juan Forster in 1864, whose son, Marcus built the neighboring adobe rancho. The compound was subsequently used as a corral and stables until it completely crumbled into ruin.

Location and Setting

The ruins sit on a small hill approximately 3000 feet east of the Pacific Ocean and 85 feet above sea level within the Camp Pendleton U.S. Marine Corps Base. The site is 32 feet above a small wash that runs from the northeast to the southwest and that separates it from the Las Flores Ranch House, built in 1868 (Figure 1). The hillslope continues to rise to the north and is surmounted by a possibly artificially flattened area that has been recently landscaped by the Boy Scouts who currently lease the property. The lower saddle on which the *estancia* is located continues to the northwest for approximately 60 meters before falling off into a deep artificially cut basin. A precipitous drop has been cut for the railroad right-of-way on the southwest, approximately 80-100 m from what was the front facade. Historic records indicate a spring once ran from the base of the hill.

Average annual precipitation for coastal San Diego County is approximately 13 inches, but annual fluctuation can be extreme and unpredictable. Most rainfall occurs between November and April in what is a typical Mediterranean type climatic regime. Average temperatures are a mild 63 degrees with winter lows rarely falling below freezing but summer

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8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Pre-historic Archaeology
Historic Aboriginal Archaeology
Historic Non-Aboriginal Archaeology
Native American Ethnic Heritage
Social History

Period of Significance

Milling Stone Horizon 7,000 B.P.
Late Prehistoric A.D. 100-1769
Spanish Mission A.D. 1769-1833
Indian Pueblo A.D. 1833-1854
Cultural Affiliation Mexican/E. American A.D. 1854-1880
Luiseno

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Summary Paragraph, Statement of Significance

The Las Flores *estancia* site is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at both the National and State level of significance in the area of Native American Ethnic Heritage and Social History (Criterion A) and for Prehistoric, Historic Aboriginal, and Historic Non-aboriginal Archaeology (Criterion D).

Historical Background

Prehistoric and Ethnohistoric Periods

The Las Flores area has been occupied for at least the last 7,000-10,000 years. Habitation sites and shell middens variously attributed to the Millingstone Horizon or La Jolla Complex, are well documented all along the northern San Diego County coast and in the vicinity of Las Flores (Moratto, 1984:146-151). These groups, flourishing between 7,000-8,000 B.C. and A.D.100, exploited both marine and terrestrial resources with emphasis on marine mollusks, fish, acorns, numerous seed bearing plants, and small to large mammals. Their material assemblage included ground stone, dart points, and simple cobble-based tools, and stone scrapers, coggled stones, and tightly flexed inhumations that are often associated with broken metates. Some anomalous early ceramic finds are also known (Moratto, 1984:149). Much of this economic and cultural pattern continued into the Late Prehistoric Period. Only a mile to the south, San Diego State University archaeologists investigated a cemetery in the alluvium of Las Flores Creek. Fourteen tightly flexed inhumations were uncovered, with one producing a radiocarbon date of A.D. 300. One unusual burial was covered by a whale scapula, a practice described among the Chumash as early as 1776 by the missionary explorer, Pedro Font. The

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bancroft, Hubert Howe

1874 Personal Observations During a Tour Through the Line of Missions of Upper California. Unpublished manuscript, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

1884 *History of California, Vol. I.* A.L.Bancroft and Company, San Francisco.

1886 *History of California, Vol.III.* The History Company, San Francisco.

Beauchamp, R. Mitchel

1986 *The Flora of San Diego, County, California.* Sweetwater River Press, National City, California.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

National Park Service-Western Region

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 1.67

UTM References

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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

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D

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Verbal Boundary Description

The 1.67 acre sites sits on top of a small hill, 0.8 miles west of Las Flores Creek that flows from Las Pulgas Canyon and 0.55 miles northeast of the Pacific Ocean. The 25 meter square compound is a vegetation-covered square formed by eroded adobe wall stubs. The subsurface archaeological site extends out for 80 meters from the square adobe compound perimeter in every direction, covering most of the hill (Figure 1).

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Boundary Justification

Tests indicate the presence of subsurface archaeological remains within 80 meters of the compound. Some of this artifact scatter on the south and east sides of the compound can be seen in the 1872-1875 photograph (Figure 5). Artifact densities and depth of deposits were greatest in the area

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11. Form Prepared By

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highs reaching above 100 degrees (Bowman, 1973:2-5). The rolling hills around Las Flores supported a coastal grassland vegetative community, with coastal sage scrub dominating the steep slopes to the east. The nearby Las Pulgas Canyon supported a riparian woodland community (Beauchamp, 1986). In historic times the natural environment was drastically changed, first by cattle grazing in the early Mission Period, agriculture in the Mission *estancia* period and Indian Pueblo Period, and then by intensive agriculture in the American Period. Numerous soil types are located in the immediate vicinity but the site proper is classified as Visalia Series sandy loam that supported annual grasses, chamise, flattop buckwheat, and scrub oak (Bowman, 1973:81). Pleistocene marine terrace deposits underlie these soils and include hard clays, consolidated sands, and cobbles (Jenkins, 1966).

Integrity

Low mounds of eroded adobe mark the approximately 25 meter (82 ft) square structure. The compound was built with the corners pointing to the cardinal directions and the front facade facing southwest towards the Pacific. Room block outlines and the central courtyard are clearly visible although only one wall segment still stands near the eastern corner. This wall segment was much more substantial in the 1960s (Pourade, 1961:236) and the remaining four or five courses receive some protection from a small roof erected by the Boy Scouts (Figure 2). It is impossible, however, to discern on the ground all of the fifteen rooms indicated by Englehardt (1921:106) (Figure 3).

Rodent activity has disturbed much of the ruin and the underlying archaeological deposits that extend out for about forty meters in every direction from the adobe compound. Pottery, lithics, fire-affected rock, ground stone fragments, bone, and charcoal have been brought to the surface within and around the compound. Pieces of fired clay roof tiles and fired adobe pavers litter the ruin. *Donax gouldi* or bean clam shell concentrations occur in various locations around the ruins and also from rodent backfill within the compound. These small pelecypods are ubiquitous to prehistoric midden deposits and despite their small size, appear to have been a staple food item (Ezell, 1975:15). Shell bearing midden deposits that have been brought to the surface within the *estancia* structure suggest it was built on a prehistoric occupation site.

Historic sources and photographs indicate all the slopes around the *estancia* were plowed for agriculture until at least 1942. Only the adobe compound was spared. Although disk plowing would have only minimally disturbed the uppermost levels, at least one episode of more destructive deep plowing occurred when the McGees owned the rancho (Ezell, 1975:14).

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A dirt road skirts by the northeastern side of the ruin, just missing the architectural element but cutting through archaeological deposits and exposing bits of fired brick, shell, and other artifacts. Subsurface deposits have also been impacted by installation of plastic irrigation lines and trees used for landscaping.

Architectural History

No renderings of the *estancia* date to the c. 1823 construction date. H.M.T. Powell's 1850 sketch of the front facade, however, reveals a unique architectural style, quite different from other mission buildings (Figure 4). A stuccoed adobe central two-story room block had five windows and central door. The moderately pitched hipped roof supported one central gabled dormer window. One-story wings on either side of the central section contained symmetrically arranged windows and doors. An additional arched door at the west end was also shown. The two-story campanile or bell tower appears to have been topped with a weather vane. Secondary buttress walls appear on either end of the central room block.

Englehardt (1921:106) provides the only schematic floor plan from an unidentified and unconfirmed source. It shows a chapel and vestry in the far eastern room of the east wing. Five rooms on the east and west sides extend north and are tied by a back wall that completes the courtyard enclosure. One central doorway provided access from the north into the courtyard (Figure 3). Many of these features can be seen in a rare and previously unpublished photograph of the ruined *estancia* taken in 1872-1875, and found in the photographic archives of the San Diego Historical Society (Figure 5). This is a time when only a few Indians remained on the ranch and the degenerating structure was used to house Mexican and Indian vaqueros, and to stable horses for the San Diego-Los Angeles stage line (Stephenson 191936:8-9). The central room block has collapsed and only portions of the two wings remain. Door and window placement closely matches the 1850 drawing but it appears that the arched portion of the door on the far left had been blocked to form a rectangular doorway. The arched doorway shown at the far right is in the approximate area of the only remaining exposed wall fragment. The original roof tile may have been reused in the construction of other adobes. A thatched roof now protected the remaining rooms which may have been used as stables or storerooms (note the horse). Historical sources also indicate the presence of granaries, corrals, and irrigation ditches in the general area.

The progression from a standing structure to an archaeological site is seen in another photograph in the San Diego Historical Society Archives that probably dates to the late 19th or early 20th Century (Figure 6). Probably also from the one-story front room blocks, large wall segments still preserve the pitched roof line. Other segments have already been reduced to wall

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stubs or melted adobe mounds. Two typical Spanish mill stones, now gone, lie as testimony to ✓
agriculture and industry at Las Flores.

Subsurface Testing ProgramField Methods and Archival Sources

A total of 16 shovel tests were excavated around the *estancia* ruins to determine the spatial extent, depth, degree of preservation, and cultural origins of subsurface archaeological deposits. Test data were then used to recommend empirically justifiable site boundaries for the ruin. Each 30x30 cm square test unit was dug with shovel, hand picks, and trowel, and all soil was sifted through 1/8 in screen. Notes were taken on the depth of retrieved artifacts, soil characteristics, stratigraphy, and preservation. Soil was removed until sterile conditions were encountered or a depth of 50 cm was reached, after which it was impossible to extract more soil. Most shovel tests were excavated on the hillslopes surrounding the adobe compound. They were spaced at 20 m intervals on radiating lines from a central datum, established at the eastern post of the roofed ramada that protects the last standing adobe wall. No units were placed inside the compound because the significance of the architectural elements and associated archaeology are immediately evident and we wanted to minimize damage to subsurface remains. Neither were units placed in the area to the northwest because there was substantial surface evidence that this area had been graded down to the sterile clay. Two units were placed further east from the *estancia*; one along the dirt road between the Forster ranch house and the *estancia* (STP 11) and one in the vicinity of a playground behind the Forster house (STP 12). These were locations identified by the Boy Scouts for a rest room and swimming pool facility and these tests were designed to determine if subsurface archaeological remains were present.

Archival sources were examined and translated by Dr. William Mason, Department of History, Los Angeles Museum of Natural History. His investigations included the Huntington Library, Bancroft Library Manuscript Files, and Santa Barbara Mission Archives. Jackson Research Projects. examined documents at the Sacramento State Library, Bancroft Library, Huntington Library, and San Diego Historical Society Library. Jackson Research has prepared a separate National Register Nomination for the Las Flores Adobe (Forster Ranch) (Wee and Mikesell, 1991).

Shovel Test Results

The locations of shovel tests are shown on Figure 1 and the results summarized in Table 1. The top 10-25 centimeters of most units was a soft dark brown clayey silt containing few

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artifacts, except those units closest to the compound. Very hard clays lay under the topsoil in which were embedded pieces of fired adobe brick and tile fragments, aboriginal ceramics, bone, shell, small ground stone fragments, bone and shell. Most ground stone pieces appear to have been fire affected. All aboriginal pottery was of the local Tizon Brown Ware variety, with no observed fibre tempered pieces characteristic of Mission influence. One square-lipped bowl rim was recorded among the 14 fragments. Tizon Ware extends through much of the late prehistoric and ethnohistoric chronology from A.D.500 to around 1900. It is thought to have been adapted very late by the coastal Luiseño and Gabrieleño whose repertoire of shapes is smaller than the Kumeyaay. Ceramic technology was learned in some cases through Kumeyaay influence as aboriginal potters accompanied the padres north (True, 1966:219; Hoover and Costello, 1985:30-31, May 1978). Fired adobe pieces were usually too fragmentary to determine if they derive from adobe bricks, floor tiles (*ladrillos*), or roof tiles (*tejas*). Several pieces were large enough to assume they came from fired adobe bricks that may derive from either burnt rooms, kiln construction, or other uses requiring sturdier building materials. One curved piece can be assigned to the roof tile category while floor tiles could be used for paving, arches, fountains, doorways, or irrigation features (Hoover and Costello, 1985:49-54). The fragmentary and dispersed character of fired adobe finds suggest they remain from the final abandonment and disintegration of the *estancia* and may have also undergone secondary disturbance.

Only a few European items were found. Small pieces of dark colored and heavily patinated glass came from two units close to the *estancia*. STP 6 also produced one small fragment of Ironstone Ware with a blue floral transfer printed design. This type of bright blue floral pattern, typical of the popular "willow pattern" was made by British potters from about 1815, through the Spanish, Mexican, and early American Periods, until the present (Hume, 1969:129-130). Similar examples are common to the Alta California missions (Hoover and Costello, 1985:29; Costello and Gasco, 1985:148; Deetz, 1978:183).

American period items derive from the one unit (STP 12) behind the Forster Adobe. A large hand wrought spike and four glass sherds were found in shallow artifact-bearing hardpack clay soils.

Current and Past Disruptive Influences

Some deposits outside the compound are certainly disturbed by plowing but the potential is great for preserved features and archaeological deposits below the plow zone. Several studies have also demonstrated that while plowing disturbed vertical relationships, the lateral position of artifacts is not greatly affected or occurs in systematic ways that still do not compromise the research value of plowed sites (Trubowitz, 1978; O'Brien and Lewarch, 1981; Dunnell, 1990).

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Unfortunately most soil below the upper humus level has solidified back to a compact concrete-hard adobe, making it difficult to distinguish between plow zone and undisturbed deposits. Extensive rodent activity was also noted throughout the area, further complicating stratigraphic interpretation. Despite these drawbacks, it is expected that most artifacts remain close to their original locus of deposition, in horizontal if not vertical terms. Of course the best preservation would be within the unplowed adobe compound, despite rodent damage.

The historical review (below) and results of testing (above) provide some predictions for what would be found within the ruins. Little in situ primary refuse from the Mission or Pueblo period would remain on occupational surfaces, but much valuable architectural information must still remain. Most of the artifacts found on floor surfaces would relate to the building itself and to later uses as storage buildings and stables in the early American period. Any rooms that may have been abandoned or collapsed prior to this period, however, may still contain materials from the Mission *estancia* or Indian Pueblo periods. Although some architectural modification may have been made over the years, most of the foundations, adobe wall stubs, and built-ins probably date to the original construction. Some of the best preserved prehistoric midden deposits probably exist under the floor level within the compound, as the exterior areas have been extensively plowed for many decades.

No direct evidence of pot hunting or vandalism were observed within the adobe compound. The site probably benefitted from being on private property, and later, gained protection by enclosure within Camp Pendleton in 1942. Some midden deposits outside the compound continue to be disturbed by a dirt road and by landscape activities associated with the Boy Scout Camp, but the compound remains unaffected.

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TABLE 1
LAS FLORES SHOVEL TEST INVENTORY

STP Number	Maximum Depth (cm)	Fired Terra Cotta	Pottery	Ground Shovel	Fire Affected Rock	Flaked Stone	Shell(gm)	Bone (gm)	Glass	Comments
1	50+	16	5	2	---	2	18.6	3.7	2	Burnished Tizon, burned bone, much shell
2	43	5	---	3	2	1	---	1	---	Mano frags at 35 and 40 cm, charcoal and shell present
3	35+	5	---	2	---	1	---	---	---	Ground stone at 30-30 cm, rodent disturbance
4	30	---	---	1	---	---	---	2.5	---	Burnt large mammal bone
5	20	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	Negative
6	40	19	5	2	---	1	3.6	5.8	---	Four Tizon, one blue-on-white transfer printed
7	30	7	---	2	1	---	1.3	---	1	Schist disk
8	28	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	One milky quartz, possible stater
9	30	2	---	---	1	---	---	---	---	Almost sterile
10	20	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	Negative
11	15	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	Negative, proposed shower
12	28	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	One 4-inch hand iron spike, proposed swimming pool
13	30+	10	3	---	---	1	---	---	---	One square Tizon rim sherd
14	30	12	1	1	---	---	---	1.3	---	One Tizon
15	25	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	Negative
16	25	1	1	---	---	1	---	---	---	One roof tile

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late date and associated Cottonwood Triangle projectile point indicated this was the cemetery of prehistoric Luiseño Indians just before the advent of cremation practices and ceramics (Ezell, 1975:64-69). The late prehistoric complex that is associated with the Luiseño has been defined as the San Luis Rey Complex and is defined by cremations, bedrock mortars, portable metates, triangular arrow points, bone awls, stone and shell ornaments; and in the later phase, ceramics, pictographs, and Euro-American trade items (Moratto, 1984:154). True (1966) investigated the formal differences between the San Luis Rey Complex associated with the Luiseño and the Cuyamaca Complex to the south associated with the Kumeyaay.

The Luiseño were Shoshonean speaking people occupying what is now northern San Diego and southern Orange and Riverside Counties (Strong 1929, White 1963). They were linguistically and culturally related to the Gabrieleño and the Cahuilla, and represent a late prehistoric population intrusion from the western Great Basin, probably displacing the prehistoric ancestors of the Yuman speaking Kumeyaay to the south. Strong (1929:275-76) recorded the *Hōwak* lineage as inhabitants of the Las Flores area. Two village names associated with the Las Flores area are *Chumelle* and *Quesinille* as listed in Grijalva's report of the August 17-26, 1795 expedition by Fr. Juan Mariner (Bancroft, 1884 I:563; Englehardt, 1921:6). A total of fourteen rancherias were counted on that trek. The village of *Huisme* is also specifically mentioned at Las Flores in the c. 1815 *Padron* or summary of neophytes from Mission San Luis Rey (Santa Barbara Mission Archives). Sparkman (1908:192) recorded the village name as *Ushmai*. The Luiseño followed a dispersed rancheria settlement pattern within which several named seasonally or permanently occupied villages might be associated with a specific lineage. Historical references to the Luiseño occupants of Las Flores do not often distinguish between specific settlements that may be located at some distance from the *estancia* but still retain a geographical association with "Las Flores".

Mission Period

The Portolá expedition established Spanish contact with the Luiseño of Las Flores on July 21, 1769. Father Juan Crespi described the wild roses that covered the hillsides, hence the name "Los Rosales" for the place, later to be altered to "Las Flores". He observed Indian burning of grass during a rabbit drive. A few miles to the north they baptized two dying girls for which the place "Los Cristianitos" derives its name (Bancroft, 1884 I:140-145). Pedro Fages, Portola's second in command, provided a more brusque description of Los Rosales but adds that natives all along the coast were cordial and presented fish, nuts, pine nuts, acorns, and seeds in exchange for glass beads and trinkets (Priestly, 1937:7-8). By the time the famous chronicler of the Anza Expedition, Fray Pedro Font, visited the region on January 9, 1776, the name "Las Flores" had come into common usage. He used the place name in reference to either San

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Onofre or Las Pulgas where the small lake in an arroyo provided the only permanent water between the San Luis Rey River and the Santa Margarita River (Bolton, 1931:189).

The founding of Mission San Juan Capistrano on November 1, 1776 brought the Las Flores rancherías into the Spanish political and religious sphere of influence. It was probably not long before Las Flores people visited San Juan Capistrano to be baptized and exposed to new ideas and technology. Baptisms from Huisme ranchería at Las Flores appear as early as Sept. 1, 1779 in the San Juan Capistrano records, of which 13 such are recorded (Santa Barbara Mission Archives). The site received close inspection on August 18, 1795 when during an expedition to locate another mission between San Diego and San Juan Capistrano, Father Mariner wrote:

We examined Las Flores; but we did not discover more running water than that from the road, and from the dry arroyo above, and it has only a small spring. The rancherías, including Santa Margarita and Las Flores, that speak the language of San Juan Capistrano, number fourteen. So in all we passed forty and we were close by said places (Englehardt, 1921:5).

Mariner finally recommended the site of San Juan Capistrano el Viejo for the next mission, later to be founded as Mission San Luis Rey on June 13, 1798. The Las Flores rancherías now came officially under the religious jurisdiction of San Luis Rey and its founder, Fr. Antonio Peyri. His policies favored keeping the Luiseño at their own villages rather than bringing them all into the mission proper. The padres considered establishing a second line of missions in the sierras to reach isolated villages and runaway neophytes. Irrigation and agricultural projects, crafts, and other aspects of mission technology could also be disseminated from these outposts, in addition to spreading the Catholic faith. This idea was abandoned and instead a hierarchical system of improved outposts was established that provided increasingly greater liturgical and secular services (Weber 1975, 1988, Harley 1989). The most rudimentary were *ranchos* that contained a chapel for the Spanish *mayordomo* and Indian neophytes. A cattle ranch with improved chapel and facilities might be referred to as a *sitio*. One step higher was an *estancia*: a cattle ranch with a upgraded chapel, some liturgical facilities, and the ability for Mass to be said on an irregular schedule when a visiting priest was in residence. Going one step further was the *asistencia*, a fully developed small mission with a chapel that provided all the services of a large mission: regular Mass on Sundays and holy days, marriages, baptisms, and funerals. The only difference between an *asistencia* and a mission is that the former lacked a full-time resident priest (Englehardt 1921:374, Weber 1975:70-71).

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Las Flores has been mistaken for an *asistencia* since the American Period. Several American travelers, starting with Emory (1848:181-182), referred to it as a "mission" because of its impressive architecture, bell tower, chapel, and strategic location. It is difficult to determine when the designation of *asistencia* first appeared in historical scholarship. Englehardt (1921) carefully avoided this term in every mention of Las Flores in his volume on Mission San Luis Rey. Every primary source he cited referred to Las Flores only as a *rancho*. He also appeared to also make this distinction, although ambiguously, while arguing that San Bernardino Rancho never attained greater status: "The rancho of San Bernardino could therefore not compare with the *asistencia* of San Antonio de Pala, or even with that of Las Flores, which both belonged to Mission San Luis Rey (Englehardt 1927:143)". Eventually the term crept into descriptions of Las Flores and became more popularly known through Pourade's (1961: 236) sometimes uncritical and poorly referenced historical syntheses of San Diego. This tradition was codified by the U.S. Government when Las Flores "asistencia" was added to the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings (Snell 1968). In that year, the U.S. Geological Survey also identified the Las Flores "asistencia" on the Las Pulgas Canyon, Calif. 7.5 minute series topographic map. The designation was literally cast in bronze upon the dedication of the plaque adjoining the ruins, proclaiming the "Las Flores (San Pedro) Asistencia" as California Registered Historical Landmark No. 616 (Chamberlin 1983).

Presumably the above authors failed to adequately understand the function of an *asistencia* and in any event, were probably eager to elevate a local site to a status that enhanced its historical and cultural value. A second line of more careful historical scholarship correctly identified Las Flores as an *estancia* by avoiding implicit interpretations and attempting a more critical examination of existing documents. First, there is no primary reference to Las Flores as an *asistencia*. Most documents (cited below) continue a long tradition of acknowledging the primary function of Las Flores in the mission system as a *rancho*. Official Spanish recognition of Las Flores as an *estancia* is cited in no less an important reference as Bancroft (1886:555). He specifically discussed *ranchos*, *sitios*, and *estancias* as mission establishments and found references to San Pedro (Las Flores) as one of two *estancias* listed in the 1828 *Provisional State Papers, Presidios* (Manuscript, Vol. 1, p. 98) and the 1830 *State Papers, Missions* (Manuscript, Vol. 5, p.38). These are the only known Spanish Period references to Las Flores as anything other than a *rancho*. Edith Buckland Webb (1952:303) was also one of the more astute scholars to correctly identify Las Flores as an *estancia*. In recent years, the issue was directly addressed by Weber (1975, 1988) who lists Las Flores as one of twelve well documented *estancias* in Alta California. The same identification of Las Flores is employed by Hartley (1989) to similarly argue that Rancho San Bernardino has been inappropriately designated an *asistencia* of Mission San Gabriel and it too functioned as a more limited *estancia*.

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In fact, Mission San Luis Rey established only one *asistencia* in 1810 at San Antonio de Pala on the upper San Luis Rey River; the third of five to be developed in Alta California. The next closest was Santa Ysabel, established as the last in 1818 by Mission San Diego de Alcalá. In fact, Las Flores is somewhat unique compared to the other mission establishments because it is located on the coast and not only serviced the local rancheria but also served as a way-station between San Luis Rey and San Juan Capistrano. As discussed below, Las Flores also lacked a cemetery that would normally be expected at an *asistencia*.

The primary documents concerning the historical setting and function of Las Flores can now be reviewed. Prior to the establishment of an *estancia*, a letter of April 8, 1810 describes mission cattle at Las Flores and the existence of a *casco* or shelter where cattle are kept. In the letter to Francisco Maria Ruiz, Fr. Peyri complains of San Diego Presidio soldiers pasturing their horses at las Flores:

Despite the fact that about a month ago I ordered all the horses of the soldiers of that Presidio from the *parage* [literally a "place"; in this sense a grazing area for stock] of Batequitos, which has been occupied for some years by the herds of sheep, persuaded that it would be with the order of the governor of the provinces, but in fact you not only occupied the mentioned *parage*, but also now again we come to the *parage* of Las Flores, of this mission. We can no longer feel that it is by order of the governor, but that you yourself placed them there, without considering that said *parage* is the *casco* [literally shell or helmet, hereinafter translated as shelter] where the cattle are kept, and where most of the year the *rodeo* [roundups] are held. In the months of November, December, and January, several there died for lack of pasture, and although there is a little pasture now, the cattle are now in the rainy season; most of the cattle are now in the *canada* [vale] of Santa Margarita, finishing the little pasture there is. They will go on to the next vale, and the only one, of Las Flores, and if it is found grazed by the soldiers' horses, what will the cattle live on? I wouldn't know, nor would you. There is only left to say: more than ever, the cattle of San Luis. Don Francisco, this *parage* belongs to the mission, and the mission needs it, needs it, needs it. With this supposition, we beg of you to rescind the order you have given while you ask the governor his opinion, and we shall ask the Padre Presidente for his way of thinking on the matter, which, in similar cases and such critical circumstances, I turn to you, as we must conform to their decisions, and not to that which we may desire, as such. (Alexander Taylor Collection #356, pp.0213-0214, Huntington Library Facsimiles; translation and comments by William M. Mason)

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Lt. Ruiz wrote back to Fr. Peyri the same day that he did not think the mission needed the Las Flores pasturage, apologized, and said he would remove the horses in "a month or two" but only if there were no suits or evidence of mission need. (#358, pp. 0214-0215). Incensed, Fr. Peyri sent off a long complaint to Governor Joaquin de Arrillaga on April 10, 1810. Some excerpts indicate the importance of Las Flores as a source of water and grass land to both the mission and the Las Flores rancheria:

Senor Governor, if it has rained but little in San Diego, here it has rained no more, and if the lieutenant is concerned about his horses, we are no less worried, and we need it all for many cattle at the least, and horses. Because of the lack of pasture we have the greater part of the sheep in the mountains, and in consideration of how little it has rained, it is well that there be as much or more rain than last year... You know that, from the vale of Santa Margarita, which is next to the mission, to San Marco, there is neither water nor vale except for Las Flores. which is the shelter, and cattle roundups are done there.

Governor, the year is bad; on one side is the Mission San Juan, and on the other, the horses. What remains for the cattle of San Luis Mission? Besides, what we do not know [illegible] is what the soldiers' horse-herd (which he has from Batequitos to the presidio) that the cattle of San Luis Mission does not; the former is of 600 to 700 horses, this cattle of great numbers [illegible] begins the notation, and the greater part placed in the felicitous vale of Las Flores.

The crops of the mission are almost dried up for lack of water. If it doesn't rain in the next two weeks, we shan't harvest a single grain here. In years like these the main hope for [illegible] for the Indians is beef, but with the assistance we are receiving from the lieutenant, not even this can we hope [illegible] with the grace of God... (#358, pp. 0215-0216).

Fr. Peyri and Domingo Carranza penned a second letter to Governor Arrillaga on May 16, complaining that the situation had not been rectified despite the governor's assurances. The padre expressed fears that the presidio herd would remain because horse relay soldiers [*remuda*] had passed by, presumably to change steeds (#356, pp. 0233-0234).

Throughout this early period, various individuals from the rancheria of *Huisme* at Las Flores became neophytes in residence at San Luis Rey Mission. The *Padron* of c. 1815-1817 lists 98 people who are either derived from *Huisme*, married to someone from *Huisme*, or were

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born to a parent from *Huisme* (Santa Barbara Mission Archives). The majority of the wives were from other villages, indicating both the traditional pattern of preferred moiety exogamy, but also the influence of mission life (Strong, 1929:286). It is also interesting to note that most individuals were baptized at San Juan Capistrano Mission. Certainly many of the older people were baptized there before San Luis Rey was founded in 1798, but records show they continued this tradition right through 1815 despite the greater distance between San Juan Capistrano and Las Flores.

Few details of the *estancia* can be gleaned from historical sources. Fr. Peyri wrote on December 31, 1823 that Las Flores was also known as *San Pedro*, and that the patio-shaped compound included granaries and a tiled roof (Englehardt, 1921:36). Peyri makes no mention of a chapel, suggesting that one had not yet been built or consecrated. Granaries are mentioned at Pala by 1810 but no chapel is mentioned there until 1819 (William Mason, 1991; personal communication). Las Flores certainly functioned as a ranch in its early days and may have retained that status during the early phases of construction. Although still applying the term, "rancho", Peyri describes additional functions on December 22, 1827 that suggest it may have attained the status of *estancia*:

In the same direction, to the north at a distance of three leagues [from San Luis Rey], the Mission has the Rancho of San Pedro, known as Las Flores. The place has a house, granaries, and a chapel, which buildings form a square or large patio. Holy Mass is offered up in the chapel. In the patio, by means of water taken out of a pool near the sea, corn is raised. In the plain, wheat and barley are raised in season. About one league from the ranch are the pastures for the cattle. The locality is called Las Pulgas (Englehardt, 1921:51-52).

Cattle ranching for hides and tallow was the foremost economic enterprise of the missions, and Las Flores provided ample pasturage for that purpose. The Mexican government prohibited trade with English or American merchant vessels (despite a thriving black-market), but Governor Echeandia on October 7, 1827 granted Fr. Peyri's request to trade with the English frigate *Thomas Nolan* anchored at San Juan Capistrano. He permitted 1,500 Las Flores cattle hides to be embarked (Englehardt, 1921:50). These were probably exchanged for European manufactured goods such as transfer printed ironstone pottery, of which an example was found in the testing program.

Alfred Robinson's recollections encompass the time between 1829 and 1842 when he worked as a representative of Bryant, Sturgis & Company in the hide and tallow trade after it was opened to American vessels. Like other Yankee merchants, he learned Spanish, converted

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to Catholicism, and married into a prominent California family. After describing the miserable conditions of Indians at San Luis Rey he recalled:

After taking leave of our hospitable friend, we mounted our horses and rode on without meeting any place worthy of notice till we came to the "Rancho de las Flores", one of the cattle establishments of San Luis. It is situated on an eminence commanding a view of the sea, with the distant islands of St. Clemente and Catalina, and overlooking an adjacent level, extending for miles around, covered with thousands of animals grazing. A few inferior gardens are scattered about in the little valleys, cultivated by Indians, for their own personal benefit, and in which they are permitted to labor when not required to give their time to the interests of the Mission (Robinson, 1844:26-27).

Indian Pueblo Period

Mexican independence from Spain in 1821 marked the beginning of the end for the missions. Although Fr. Peyri was offered an exemption from the March 20, 1829 expulsion decree of Spaniards from Mexican territory, he decided to leave nonetheless on January 17, 1832 (Englehardt, 1921:52). In 1833 the Mexican Congress passed the Secularization Act that ordered half of all mission lands to be handed over to the Indians, the remainder to be held in trust by an appointed administrator (Hutchinson 1965). The missions were in fact established to transform traditional Native American peoples into normative pueblo-living Christian subjects of Spain or *gente de razon*. Paternalistic attitudes of the Padres, Native resistance to change, Mexican covetousness of Mission lands, and political circumstances worked against these goals. Then Governor Figueroa appointed Don Pablo de la Portilla as commissioner at San Luis Rey in January 1833. Letters soon arrived to the Governor from Fr. Duran that discipline had fallen among the Indians and soldiers and that Portilla was disinterested in rectifying the situation. Disorders were resulting from the attempted distribution of lands. In April of 1833 Fr. Vicente Pasqual Oliva reported that only 100 fanegas of wheat could be supplied rather than the expected 1000 fanegas. The situation had obviously deteriorated (Englehardt, 1921:88-91). About this time Las Flores appears to have been made into an experimental Indian Pueblo under the administration of Governor Figueroa (Englehardt, 1921:100). The circumstances of that sale were documented in the later Rancho Santa Margarita and Las Flores Land claims case (below). On a trip north from San Diego in 1834, Don Agustín Janssens later recounted: "The day I left San Luis, accompanied by Rojas, I slept at Rancho de los Flores which belonged to the mission. No one was there but Indians" (Ellison and Prices, 1953:22). Conditions appear to have improved during the following year. The omission of Las Flores from the August 22, 1835 San Luis Rey Mission inventory confirms the independence of Las Flores (Bancroft Library, California Archives, Vol 51:11-12). A letter by Gov. Figueroa to Alamitos, the Alcalde of

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Pueblo Las Flores, directs the distribution of the buildings to the inhabitants and indicating those necessary as church buildings. A census of March 1, 1836 by José Manuel Flores counted 196 residents. A letter of July 8, 1836 indicates that the pueblo sent an inventory of documents to Santiago Arguello, commander of the San Diego Presidio (Bancroft Library, Vol. 51:95). Unfortunately neither the inventory nor the pueblo archives have survived. Some may have been destroyed in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake (Shipek, 1977).

M. Eugene Duflot de Mofras, former attache of the French embassy at Madrid, visited San Luis Rey between January 18 and 27, 1842. He was apparently surprised to hear the Indians ask if Fr. Peyri was still alive in Spain, demonstrating their continued concern and devotion to the padre (Mofras, 1937). He wrote:

The principal ranchos of the Mission are Las Flores, San Antonio de Pala, San Jacinto, Santa Margarita, Agua Caliente, San Onofrio, San José, and Temecula. They are nearly all in ruins. Two Leagues to the north of San Luis Rey lies the Rancho of Santa Marguerite, at present in the hands of someone who raises very fine grapes on it. Two leagues beyond this is the great ranch and the chapel of Las Flores, erected upon a little elevation a few hundred yards from the seashore and very picturesque in appearance...

A few hours after our arrival at Las Flores, the Indians, headed by two chiefs, who bore batons as marks of authority, advanced to meet us. They were accompanied by their families... (Englehardt, 1921:123-124).

Provincial instability and civil war marked the 1830s and 1840s as various appointed officials vied for political control. A steady change of leadership between 1831 and 1836 finally resulted in Carlos Antonio Carillos' appointment as Governor of Alta California on January 6, 1837. He was to replace Juan Bautista Alvarado who acquired the post by rebellion in 1836 and refused to relinquish his position. Both raised small armies to settle their disagreement by force. José Castro led the rebel Alvarado army and forced Carrillo south from Los Angeles to San Diego where he was formally recognized as Governor by most of San Diego's and Los Angeles's leading citizens. Upon returning north to dislodge Alvarado, Carrillo learned at Mission San Luis Rey that Alvarado was proceeding south with an army of about 300 men. Carrillo proceeded to Las Flores where the *estancia* became a barracks, and the corral, a fort. In events dramatically retold by Janssens (Ellison and Price, 1953:82-92), cannon were strategically mounted and only once fired. Under a flag of truce, negotiations began that resulted on April 23 in an understanding to settle matters peacefully at another time. Alvarado remained governor until being replaced by Micheltorena in 1842. The "Battle of Las Flores"

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(April 21-23, 1838) represent a minor but representative example of internal California conflicts preceding the American takeover (Bancroft, 1886 III:557-76).

Alvarado appointed William Hartnell, a naturalized English tallow and hide merchant married to a local Californio, as inspector of missions on January 19, 1839. Under his administration the experimental Indian Pueblo continued at Las Flores. Every effort was made to avoid the appalling depredations that had fallen on San Luis Rey, Temecula, and other Indian communities following secularization. The Las Flores Pueblo inhabitants requested that the livestock previously under communal control be divided among the families. Valued at \$867.00 Hartnell directed that each of the 33 families with their 46 children receive \$20.00, each of ten widowers with ten children and six widows receive \$12.00, and one Joe Maria receive \$7.00. The remaining \$8.00 was given to the most needy widows. Hartnell then admonished them to improve their lands and work for self sufficiency or else return to the Mission (Bancroft Library, California Archives, Vol. 51:301-304; Englehardt, 1921:105-107).

Despite these efforts, the acquisitive Pio Pico and his brother, Andrés, were busy expropriating as much mission property as they could. Pio Pico was the prominent Don of Rancho Jamul near San Diego and a major Californio in the political machinations of the Mexican and early American periods (Pourada, 1963). The Picos were appointed administrators of San Luis Rey, possibly by Hartnell in 1839. On June 5, 1839, Pico wrote Hartnell to complain that the Indians were running away from the mission (Englehardt, 1921:107). It was not until later that Hartnell received intelligence that they left because the Picos were appropriating mission land and property. On May 7, 1839, Fr. Ibarra described the situation at Las Flores to Fr. Duran:

When I spoke of Las Flores I said to Your Reverence that I had the most solid reasons to offer, but that I did not give them for fear that they [the Picos] would open the letter, and that it would not reach your hands. However, I will now tell you that, according to the information which I have, las Flores is a seraglio for the SS. Pico. In the month of November, Señor Don Pio and his servant arrived at the Rancheria of San Diego around midnight, and delivered an infant that had just been born to a single mother of Las Flores. The Picos occupy the house of the Padre, and the mayordomo occupies the corral. They have their cattle, and they sow their fields when they please. In fine, Las Flores belongs to the Picos; but what kind of *pueblo libre* is that? (Bancroft Library, Vol 51:289; Englehardt, 1921:114)

Word soon reached Hartnell of Pico's attempts to undermine the Indians and gain control of various mission lands. Hartnell began the process of replacing the Picos with José Antonio

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Estudillo when on August 17th, 1840, he visited Las Flores and received bitter complaints firsthand from the Indians. The Pico's cattle were damaging their crops; they had tried to stop their water ditch; and that they had taken up residence in the *estancia* despite Indian opposition (Englehardt, 1921:120-121).

Catastrophe for the Indians came when Hartnell lost his job and Governor Alvarado granted 89,742 acres of Santa Margarita Ranch to Pio and Andrés Pico on May 10, 1841. The Picos also gained title to the much coveted Temecula Rancho. Despite attempts by Administrator Estudillo and tribal elders to regain control, the Mission grants were confirmed. Pico even managed to persuade several Las Flores residents to substantiate his claim in Los Angeles court (Stephenson, 1936). The Picos received title to Las Flores in 1844. Indians continued to reside at Las Flores for the next decade, however.

Pio Pico provided a surprisingly frank description of his efforts in his blatantly self-serving memoirs:

During my administration I succeeded in securing approval from the government of Señor Alvarado that each of the Indians who founded the pueblo of Las Flores be given a yoke of oxen or a mule, besides two hundred and fifty head of cattle for the community. But it is a deplorable fact that when General Micheltorena came in 1842, these Indians no longer had any of these goods, nor anything to eat, and the majority of them had gone to the mountains. I took advantage of their circumstances to buy from the remainder their equity in the town, with the approval of the superior authorities (Botello, 1973:97-98).

Pio Pico's brother, José Antonio, managed the estate and lived at Santa Margarita. Documents from this period indicate a continued pattern whereby José and his family would periodically occupy the *estancia* building during rodeos when cattle were assembled at Las Pulgas.

The Rancho Santa Margarita and Las Flores Land Claims Case

The circumstances of the sale of Las Flores and its condition during the Mission and Pueblo periods can be partially reconstructed from the transcripts of the Proceedings for Rancho Santa Margarita and Las Flores before the United States Land Commission (Pico v. U.S. 1853, Case 700). Testimony by some of California's most notable citizens at that time shows how the Picos first obtained the Santa Margarita Rancho, excluding the 1.5 league square (20 square miles) Las Flores, and then later purchased the Pueblo from the Alcaldes of Las Flores

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(Stephenson, 1936). The accounts all corroborate the Picos' claim and of course reflect the vested interests of the Euro-American elite without regard to Indian points of view. No former residents of Las Flores were called to testify.

The first to testify was J.J. Warner, San Diego County Rancher who arrived in Southern California in 1830 and later married an Anglo ward of Pio Pico's mother. When asked about the Indians of Las Flores he answered:

There were Indians residing there at the time of my arrival in the County and Indians continue to reside there to the present time [1853]. This was a Rancho belonging to the Mission of San Luis Rey and was occupied by the Indians belonging to the Mission. About 1834 they were separated from the Mission, receiving a portion of the stock, farming tool(s) & et[c.] of the Mission. They continued to occupy the lands, but about the year 1844 their stock was so diminished that there was very little remaining (Pico v. U.S. 1853:7).

When asked if the Indian residents were still considered the proprietors he answered that he understood they sold out to Pio Pico but they continued to reside at that location and also at Santa Margarita.

Important testimony then followed from Santiago Arguello, born in Monterey in 1791 who became comandante of the San Diego presidio and later owner of Rancho Ti Juan. Arguello was subprefect of the San Diego *partido* or district at the time of the Las Flores sale. After confirming that Las Flores was a Pueblo at the time of its sale on October 8, 1844 he continued:

I know that they had no written title, for I as commissioner appointed by José Figueroa, political chief at the time in California, founded that Pueblo of Las Flores, and put the Indians in possession. Orders came from Mexico for the secularization of the Mission of California and in consequence of that order the authorities of California favored the most distinguished and industrious families of the Indians by giving them possession of lands in the manner aforesaid. The land was given to them at the same time implements of husbandry under the condition that they should not dispose of the same under three or four years after which time they were at liberty to dispose of the lands if they pleased. José Figueroa was Political Chief in California from the year 1833 to 1835 (:27)

Arguello continued to answer questions on the boundaries of Las Flores, that they received whatever consideration was in the Deed of Sale, and of similar cases at San

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Buenaventura and San Juan Capistrano. Asked to state all he knew about the occupation of Las Flores after the purchase, he replied:

The Picos by their mayordomos have occupied the Las Flores ever since the purchase. I have seen at intervals the family of Don Pio Pico living there. They have always had cattle in considerable numbers even before their purchase to the present time and I have frequently seen fields of grain there (:28-29).

Arguello went on to describe the exchange of the Picos' holdings at Rancho Temecula for Rancho Santa Margarita. He also did not know how much the Las Flores Indians were paid for their holdings.

Following testimony by Juan Alvarado, the Governor who signed the Santa Margarita Land Grant, Andrés Pico took the stand to describe how all of the documents for Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores had been stored in a desk, but were destroyed when the Rancho was looted during the American occupation (:38). Copies of the original *expediente*, including the Las Flores Deed of Sale, were subsequently discovered during research into the U.S. Surveyor General Archives and entered as evidence. Transcriptions of the original Spanish documents and English translations were provided in the Lands Commission Case. Quotes below concerning Las Flores derive from these rather uneven 1855 English translations.

The first document of the *expediente* for Rancho Santa Margarita, was signed on March 12, 1841 by Arguello, and concludes with the following:

This prefecture has only noticed that the Pueblo de Las Flores appears within the [vicinity] of the lands solicited according to the sketch of folio [1st] and this is remarkable for being a Pueblo of Indians in which they have already established their properties and marked their boundaries, but with a view of all you Excellency will determine what shall be your Imperious pleasure. (:61).

The document later continues with a section dated June 19, 1843 and signed by Micheltorena:

Excellent Sir: Geronimo José Ignacio Geronimo the first Alcalde and the other residents of the Pueblo de las Flores, for themselves and in the name of the inhabitants, before Your Excellency and with the highest respect according to the legal order in right present ourselves and say: That being natives of this post in which we have our cottages, we have cornfields and woodland: these they will cause to be separated from us, giving the

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best places to Don Pio Pico, and even depriving us of the use of the necessary water, and as we cannot continue in such a miserable state, we see ourselves obliged to implore our Excellency's well known charity, to be pleased to order that our Pueblo be measured with its respective commons /ejido/ and at the same time to leave us the free use of the water, for otherwise the families will perish and not enjoy the fruit of our labor.

Therefore we pray Your Excellency to do as asked for, whereby we shall receive a favor swearing that there is no malice therein and to what else is necessary.

Angeles June 19th, 1843 (marked)(:77).

This document is followed by an order by Man(uel) Dominguez, the *Alcalde* or Justice of the Peace in Los Angeles, to have the Pueblo of Las Flores measured and described as to the number of families, and kinds of property. This report by Reviso Aguilar mentions Tomás Serrano and Antonio Valenzuela, both *majordomos* formerly under Fr. Peyri at San Luis Rey and then under Pio Pico when he was administrator (Botello, 1973:90). Aguilar's report begins with a survey of the boundaries with a 50 vara line. This area is described as 9,450 varas on the south from the Pacific Ocean east to an elder in the "Canada de las Pulgas by Rancho Santa Margarita and continuing into the foothills, 10,500 varas on the east side from the "Canada de las Alisos" to "las Carranco" where there are several natural tanks and the corral of Father Paura. Presumably from this point west to the Pacific Ocean would mark the northern boundary of the Pueblo. The report continues with one of the more detailed descriptions of Las Flores, that even so, only provides a glimpse of life at the Pueblo:

This operation concluded, I proceeded to the examination of the Inhabitants who reside there, who having assembled and marked their names, proved to be thirty-two families. I caused the moveables they possess to be collected and I counted as follows: fifty-four sheep of the female and male sex with breed, sixty-nine beasts of burden of the same description, three and a half yokes of oxen, four milk cows. The land they have cultivated is but to a small extent, the corn fields are in a small quantity, so that the water they enjoy is sufficient for these parties.

I am now going to explain to you the motive for having caused a measurement. First to the elder tree and there after to the top was to satisfy myself of and that the prefecture might better the ambition with which those Indians aspire to clasp land which they are not capable of either protecting on cultivating and which to the best of my understanding has not been granted to them, for though they say that Don Pablo de la Portilla designated them as property the whole of the Pueblo to where they show their limits,

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they do not present any document to affirm it, nor was there in that time any formality wherefore many of them assure that Don Pablo traveled to where it suited him, and there told them that it ("the land") was theirs.

It is not to be doubted that Don Pablo should have intervened in this kind of business, but it is to be borne in mind, that the commissioner to distribute the lands when it was declared Pueblo las Flores was Don Santiago Arguello who has informed me that the limits of the Pueblo never reached towards Sta. Margarita, which they call "las pulgas" nor been to the mentioned elder tree, since they remained subject to the seed lands which are included from above where they called "la vina" (the vine yard) to the place where two points of high lands in the "Canada" form a pass and from the "Canada of las Alisos"/alder tree/to the "carraneo" (water break) for the movables they might have: and tho they allege to me, that lastly the first commissioner Don Pablo fixed their boundaries to them, yet there is no credence that they may prove it, and, I know from personal investigation into the matter that he made no addition, notwithstanding that they say that Sr. Antonio Valenzuela and Sr. Tomás Serrano were present thereto.

What regard the water, of which they made use, it has never been deprived them, for as it is close to the principal house of the Pueblo, in which site all of the families reside, and its origin is from currents and streams. They are the only one that enjoy it without being therein disputed, and in some abundance: the only thing that happens is that an Indian called Rabicato asked permission of Don Pio Pico when he administered the Mission of San Luis Rey to sow there in front of where is the elder tree.

As the licence was given him under pretence of relationship, he aggregated other Indians to his house, who slowly settled themselves there, forming small huts, and now say that it is theirs, and even supposing that it might belong to them, the water of the little creek was not prohibited them by Don Pio by reason of not having any use for it but for what animals going in the fields may take, but as the creek is not very abundant of water, it runs in a small quantity when the summer season comes, and in such a manner that it has its course al along a sandy beach, it is not possible, nor to the purpose as has been indicated (Rabicato having it in loan) that it should carry sufficient water to gain cornfields...

San Juan Capistrano July 14, 1843
(signed) Reviso Aguilar (:79-84).

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Several correspondences follow that discuss disagreements on the actual boundaries of Las Flores Pueblo and recommend that new formal papers be drawn up to secure the Las Flores Pueblo land rights. These are followed by the October 8, 1844 transcript and translation of the actual Las Flores Pueblo Land transfer to Pio Pico. The document states that Pico had "already indemnified them (the residents) for the just value which they asked for the buildings there erected with which they declare themselves satisfied (Pico v. U.S. 1853:96)". In return he will grant the Indians the favor to continue to reside in their houses and to sow their fields.

Appearing before the magistrate was Andreas Fennin Geronimo, 1st Alcalde of Las Flores, and Ravicato Santiago Geronimo, 2nd Alcalde (:95-99).

These facts are reiterated in the testimony of the Appeals documents of Pio Pico v. U.S., March 17, 1864 (317 SD, p. 124). It is difficult to explain why Pourade (1963:65) later describes a different and apparently erroneous set of circumstances for the Las Flores transfer. He states that the Picos had a grant issued in the name of Pablo Apis, who was living in the starving Indian village of Las Flores, and then transferred title to themselves. Pablo Apis was in fact the well known and politically active Luiseño chief from the Indian village of Temecula, residing there since 1843 until his death in 1854 or 1854 (Phillips, 1975, Bibb 1991). Pablo Apis probably would not have taken a part in the Las Flores transactions.

American Period

The next historical record is not until January 3, 1847 when Emory passed through with Kearney's Army of the West during the American conquest of California. He wrote:

After marching a few miles the wide Pacific opened to our view. We passed the St. Marguerita rancheria, once a dependency of San Luis Rey, now in the possession of the Pico family. We encamped near Flores, a deserted mission. Just below it, and near the ocean, is an Indian village. Cattle were seen in great numbers to-day, and several well broken pairs of oxen were picked up along the way (Emory, 1848:181-182).

Despite Emory's description of an abandoned structure, H.M.T. Powell's sketch of the *estancia* in 1850 shows a still well preserved building. Powell, a member of the Illinois Company of the American Infantry, sold sketches of San Diego and nearby missions to make a living. He first viewed Las Flores from a distance on March 12, mistaking the impressive structure for San Juan Capistrano. He made his sketch on March 13 when he bought beef and eggs from the locals (Powell, 1931:206). Cave Coues indicated Las Flores as a stopover on his sketch map of southern California, a map he reproduced many times for early gold-rush era

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immigrants (Couts, 1932). Although Indians may have no longer resided in the compound, the California State Census enumerated 90 Indians still living at Las Flores on October 12, 1852. Among them are listed Liesler, the Capitan, and Alanacio, the Alcalde (California State Census, 1852:16-17). If the Las Flores land transfer documents and Lands Claims Commission testimony are to be trusted, then these leaders must have replaced Alcaldes Fennin and Ravicato sometime between 1844 and 1852. To complicate matters, another apparent leader of Las Flores signed the unratified January 5, 1852 Treaty of Temecula between the Luiseño and Cahuilla Indians and the U.S. Government. Cisto "Go-no-snish" of Las Flores was among the 15 Luiseño signatories (reproduced in Smith, et al 1960:17). In September 1853, Cave Coutts who had become Indian subagent for the Luiseños, appointed Manuelito Cota as captain general of all the villages along the Santa Margarita and San Luis Rey river drainages, including Las Flores (Phillips, 1975:137-138). Cota, as well as Las Flores inhabitants, were all involved to some degree in the events of the 1851-1852 Garra Indian uprising. American courts upheld the Pico claim to the Las Flores Land grant. Gradually the Indians left the land from which they had lost their patrimony. Documents indicate most families had moved to Temecula or Pala by the late 1850s although several may have stayed on to work as ranch hands or domestics as late as 1873 (Hayes 1976:118, Stephenson 1936:8).

Andrés Pico's debts forced him to deed his half of the rancho to Pio, his brother, on May 21, 1862. Continued inability to make mortgage payments due to gambling debts finally forced Pio to deed over the Rancho Margarita y Las Flores to his brother-in-law Juan Forster in exchange for settling Picos's debts in 1864. Juan then gave the land around the *estancia* to one of his three sons, Marcos, as a wedding present (Stephenson, 1936:4).

It is said that Marcus Forster scavenged timbers, adobe bricks, and tiles from the *estancia* when the ranch house was built in (Chamberlin, 1983:13). This might explain the rapid deterioration that left all but the two front wings in complete ruin by 1872-1875 (Figure 5). Bancroft even mentioned the miserable condition of the former *rancho*, then used as a stable, when his stage coach stopped to change horses at Las Flores (Bancroft 1874:42, 54, 63). he Certainly the tiles may have been recycled because these photos show the remaining roof segments covered only with thatch. The adobe brick dimensions, however, do not correspond between the Forster Ranch and Las Flores compound, indication that the Las Flores oral history of adobe recycling may be only a myth (Wee and Mikesell, 1991). The San Juan Capistrano railroad station received the *estancia* bell in 1887, later transferred in 1943 to the historic Santa Margarita Ranch House and now hung in the bell tower of the Ranch House Chapel. The stone doorstep to the Ranch House Chapel courtyard is also said to derive from the Las Flores *capilla* (Chamberlin, 1983:13, Weber 1988:141).

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Context for Evaluating National and State Significance of The Las Flores *Estancia* Under Criterion A: Social History and Native American Ethnic Heritage

The site of Las Flores or San Pedro embodies the chronicle of events and social processes whereby native tribal communities were forced to adapt to the drastic changes incurred by the expansion of European and American hegemony. This process of change occurred throughout the world during the period of European Colonialism and Las Flores represents that process in microcosm. The pre-contact Luiseño component is represented by the underlying midden deposits from the Luiseño village of *Huisme*. This community was then exposed to the religion and lifeways of the missions, first by the establishment of San Juan Capistrano and then under the jurisdiction of San Luis Rey. Baptism records show that at least since 1779, San Juan Capistrano continued to be the preferred place of baptism even after San Luis Rey was established. Most Luiseño probably continued their traditional lifestyles in dispersed rancheria communities during the early years. Some may have been employed as vaqueros when mission cattle grazed the surrounding hillslopes and Las Flores became one of a number of seasonal rodeo locations. During this time the people of *Huisme* were probably exposed to many new ideas, including agriculture, irrigation, ceramic manufacture, blacksmithing, tanning, milling, weaving, masonry, carpentry, brick making, animal husbandry, and other mission introduced industries. The Las Flores population may have escaped some of the worst depredations of mission life due to disease, forced labor, and coerced social and cultural change (Cook, 1976; Phillips, 1975). Fr. Antonio Peyri of Mission San Luis Rey is credited with a more "enlightened" policy of leaving the Luiseño in their original villages rather than forcing residence at the mission. Phillips (1975:161) and White (1957) cite two factors for the lack of Luiseño opposition to missionization: Peyri's policy of very gradual acculturation, and the often hostile relationship between Luiseño lineages that made it difficult to unite against mission policies. Yet the policy of all missions was to transform the Native population into Christian, pueblo- and rancho-dwelling subjects of the Spanish Crown. The establishment of an *estancia* at Las Flores served to bring mission culture to the Luiseño rather than to bring the Luiseño to the mission. Social and economic change must have accelerated after the *estancia* was constructed. Aspects of that change are reflected in the *estancia* and its facilities: the chapel, granaries, well, irrigated gardens, and probably other elements preserved in the archaeological remains but not mentioned in archival sources. The experience of the Las Flores residents also differs from other mission outposts in that the compound also served as a hospice for travellers.

Under the articles of secularization, Governor Figueroa directed that any communities of more than 25 families may chose to become separate pueblos. When Las Flores attained the status of *Pueblo Libre* around 1833-1834, it became one of the few Indian communities to maintain its unity during the process of mission secularization (Hutchinson 1965:352-353). The

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intent was for all the missions to become pueblos but only at a few locations such as Las Flores did this actually happen. Las Flores represents one of only a few experimental Indian pueblos to be established in California, others being the Kumeyaay settlements of San Pasqual and San Dieguito, and the Luiseño pueblos of San Juan Capistrano and Pala (Jackson, 1902; Jackson and Kinney, 1883; Shipek, 1977:176-177). Unfortunately most of the records pertaining to Indian pueblos that were compiled by the Land Commission were destroyed in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake (Shipek, 1977:176-177).

Traditional lineage leadership roles were still maintained by *alcaldes* and assistant *alcaldes* at Las Flores. These dual roles are attested in the 1842 visit of Dufлот de Mofras, and the Pueblo Las Flores Deed of Sale. The 1852 census designations of an "alcalde" and "capitan" may suggest that the pueblo maintained positions that went back to mission times and which appear to be adaptations to traditional Luiseño social structure (see Shipek, 1977:145-154). The *alcalde* originally acted as intermediary between the *padres*, their *mayordomos*, or an *alcalde* general and the rest of the particular Indian community they represented. The *capitan* was equivalent to the traditional *noot* who regulated religious and other traditional activities. He functioned by giving orders to an assistant or other specialists in the community, such as the *pupulem* (shaman). The Las Flores community thus recognized both a political leader with ties to the Euro-American administration and a traditional religious leader.

Reference to an *ejido* in several documents attest to communally controlled pasture or farm lands. Despite claims that the Pueblo was not prospering, demographic data suggest some degree of stability for a time. There were 196 people counted in 1836. Thirty-three families (approximately 139 people) were counted in 1839, with 32 families still present in 1843. The residents remained after acquisition by the Picos, but the census of 1852 suggests the population was reduced to ninety individuals.

Las Flores also holds significance for Native American Ethnic Heritage. It symbolizes the efforts of the Luiseño to retain their autonomy despite Euro-American imperialism and colonialism. As late as 1961, Dr. Lowell Bean (personal communication 1991), was taken to Las Flores by Macario Kalac of Rincon Indian Reservation who still remembered stories of life at Las Flores.

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Context for Evaluating National and State Significance of the Las Flores *Estancia* under Criteria D: Archaeology

Las Flores has the potential to address substantive research questions concerning adaptations of Native American communities to rapid socio-political change. Preserved in the ruins is an archaeological record that spans the Prehistoric Period, Spanish Mission Period, Mexican Pueblo Period, and early American Period. The missions were the vanguard of Spanish colonialism in California whose goal was to prepare Native peoples for co-existence with European culture and colonial rule. The *estancia* represented the furthestmost extension of that system directly into native territory and residences. How these populations reacted and adapted to these intrusions over time is a major area of inquiry for historians, archaeologists, and anthropologists working throughout the Southwest (Spicer, 1962; Schuyler, 1978; Webb, 1952; Castillo, 1978).

Specific questions concerning each period can be addressed in any future scientific investigations. The Las Flores site provides different potential data bases depending on the historic context, each of which is discussed below.

Prehistoric Context

The best preserved prehistoric strata probably exist underneath the *estancia* ruins. These data provide information of subsistence and past lifeways before the coming of the Spanish. These prehistoric remains, and remains already recovered from other prehistoric Luiseño sites in similar habitats provide a controlled comparative data base with which to measure change.

Mission Period

Also under the *estancia* may be ethnohistoric period deposits from the village of *Huisme* dating to the period when Las Flores was an undeveloped village, under the influence of Mission San Juan Capistrano, and then a Mission San Luis Rey Rancho. The first intrusions of European goods, cultigens and, domesticated animal bones are predicted to occur in this period. How the Luiseño selectively incorporated new technology, knowledge, and foodways into their traditional culture can be examined from such deposits. Historical documents indicate some of the domesticated plants and animals used at Las Flores. But to what extent were traditional wild plants and animals still relied upon and what changes in proportions of wild and domestic foodways occurred through time? (Shipek, 1977). Documentary evidence indicates that garden plots were maintained inside the compound so that evidence may be found of irrigation ditches,

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garden borders, or tree plantings. Local flora can also be inventoried by examination of pollen and macrobotanical remains in adobe bricks.

With the building of the *estancia* came several specific questions regarding organization of labor, construction methods, and ways in which Luiseño labor was recruited to build homes, irrigation systems, and other facilities. Both the architectural remains, trash deposits discovered during testing around the compound, and subfloor deposits within the compound would provide a valuable data base.

The function of mission outposts in the Spanish colonial system remains an important area of inquiry and controversy. In this regard, the *estancia* and *asistencia* remains are an understudied institutions of the mission system. Englehardt (1927:143) discussed the problem while attempting to understand the function of the San Bernardino facility, an outpost of Mission San Gabriel. He contented that it was merely a *rancho* for herding mission cattle. A chapel was established for visiting priests to say mass for the Indian cowboys, but it did not provide the services associated with an *asistencia*. Regular mass, baptisms, and burial in a cemetery would be basic religious activities expected at a full-service mission outpost. Englehardt noted that some day San Bernardino may have grown into an *asistencia* but that it did not compare in size or complexity to San Antonio de Pala or even Las Flores. Indeed Las Flores' official status requires additional research. Many documents only refer to it as a rancho, including Fr. Peyri's 1823 description. It could be that the Spanish themselves considered these as dual purpose or vaguely defined facilities. The chapel, vestry, and campanile at Las Flores indicate regular religious observances, but where is the cemetery? How did Las Flores compare to inland *asistencias* such as San Antonio de Pala, the other facility established by Mission San Luis Rey? The restored plan at Pala indicates rooms around three sides of a large square courtyard (Newcomb, 1925:145). The entire eastern room block was dedicated to religious ceremony, with a nave, sanctuary and sacristy. To the east of the chapel was a walled cemetery of almost equal size as the entire courtyard complex. The free standing *campanario* or bell tower stood in front of the cemetery. Las Flores bears some similarities and some differences. Rooms also surround three sides of a courtyard, but with an attached *campanario* and chapel restricted to two small corner rooms (if Englehardt's map is correct). Significantly, no cemetery has been documented at Las Flores. It is not mentioned in any early historical texts and no archaeological or later archival documents indicate any human remains. Only one reference to burials could be found. J.J. Baumgartner, Jr. living as a boy at Rancho Santa Margarita in the early 1900s, mentioned seeing two fenced graves near the crumbling walls. If they existed they certainly do not appear in early photographs or historical accounts. Given other lines of evidence, the lack of a large cemetery or allocated cemetery plot and the small size of the chapel suggests some limitation to the liturgical services offered at Las Flores. These are issues that

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can be further addressed through combined programs of archival research and archaeological investigations.

Most of the original floor plan from the *estancia* still remains preserved under the surface. Vague outlines of the room blocks and courtyard can be seen under the existing wall fall and vegetation, and with excavation, the original plan and many architectural details can be reconstructed. The period of significance for the architecture would be the Spanish Mission Period (c. 1823). Englehardt's schematic floor plan does not well coincide with early renderings or photographs, so important aspects of Mission Period building plans, construction techniques, and materials are preserved and can be better defined from the remaining adobe ruins and foundations. In this regard, Powell's 1850 drawing of the front facade enhances the significance of the extant remains.

The Las Flores *estancia* ground plan follows the typical Spanish *patio* or *placita* style with rooms around a courtyard. Room entry was usually from the courtyard with few internal passageways (McAlester and McAlester, 1990:132). One-story or two-story rectangular room blocks were the rule and Las Flores is somewhat unique in having both incorporated into the front facade. Important comparisons can be made with the extant *asistencia* at Pala, presidio architecture at San Diego, and mission architecture at San Luis Rey to investigate the social, political, economic, and functional determinants of the earliest European-derived construction in California.

The *estancia* and *asistencia* was the Spanish colonial systems' closest link to the native population by establishing a mission presence directly at the traditional place of residence. How Native Americans adapted to this foreign element remains a basic area of important anthropological research. To what extent were European technology, foodways, and ideas selectively adopted or discarded by the Luiseño? Certainly the Luiseño had more autonomy at Las Flores than they would at Mission San Luis Rey. What aspects of traditional material culture, settlement patterns, and resource exploitation did the Luiseño retain? Shipek (1977:172) suggests that the Luiseño as a whole retained much more of their traditional culture and socio-cultural integrity than other California Indians at the time of secularization because Fr. Peyri did not force them to live at the mission and either deliberately or unintentionally incorporated much traditional Luiseño social organization into the mission administrative system.

Historical records pertaining to Las Flores provide significant details on the effects of mission life on patterns of birth, death, and marriage. Demographic patterns can be traced over time and associations between the rancherias and mission establishments can be traced. Although the San Luis Rey baptism records no longer exist, it can be documented that Las

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Flores residents continued to go not only to San Luis Rey, but also to San Juan Capistrano. Thus the official association of Las Flores as an *estancia* of San Luis Rey did not necessarily result in predictable behavior. Perhaps the tradition established when the Las Flores rancherias were part of the San Juan Capistrano religious sphere were still retained. Pragmatic aspects of kinship ties and ease of access also led Las Flores residents to the north rather than the south.

Indian Pueblo Period

How the change from an *estancia* to an Indian Pueblo changed life at Las Flores may be examined from several data sources. A combination of historical and archaeological research would be required, as it may be difficult to separate the Spanish and Mexican components of the Las Flores archaeological assemblage. Some changes may be evident in modifications to the compound floor plan. With the 1852 census as a guide, it would be important to examine the Las Flores floor plan and use of external areas to determine the spatial organization of specific families within the Pueblo, a pattern that may extent back to *estancia* days. Documents cited above indicate that most of the 32-33 families lived within the compound, and that a room was provided for a visiting priest (Englehardt, 1921:114; Pico V. V.S, 1853:79-84). How domestic, religious, and economic activities were organized would be of considerable interest.

American Period

All data indicate that the Pueblo Las Flores managed to persist into the American period (until 1854-55) despite having been sold a decade before to the Picos. This remarkable continuity represents a pattern of socio-economic stability that characterized Luiseño ethnohistory (Shipek, 1977). The final process of abandonment and reuse of the *estancia* compound would be represented by the last secondary trash and modifications that took place when it became a stopping place on the Los Angeles-San Diego stage coach line. Historical photographs suggest that most of this evidence would be in the front rooms as the back rooms had already collapsed by the 1860s or 1870s. Questions concerning community disintegration and site abandonment may thus be addressed from an examination of final phase artifacts and site formation processes.

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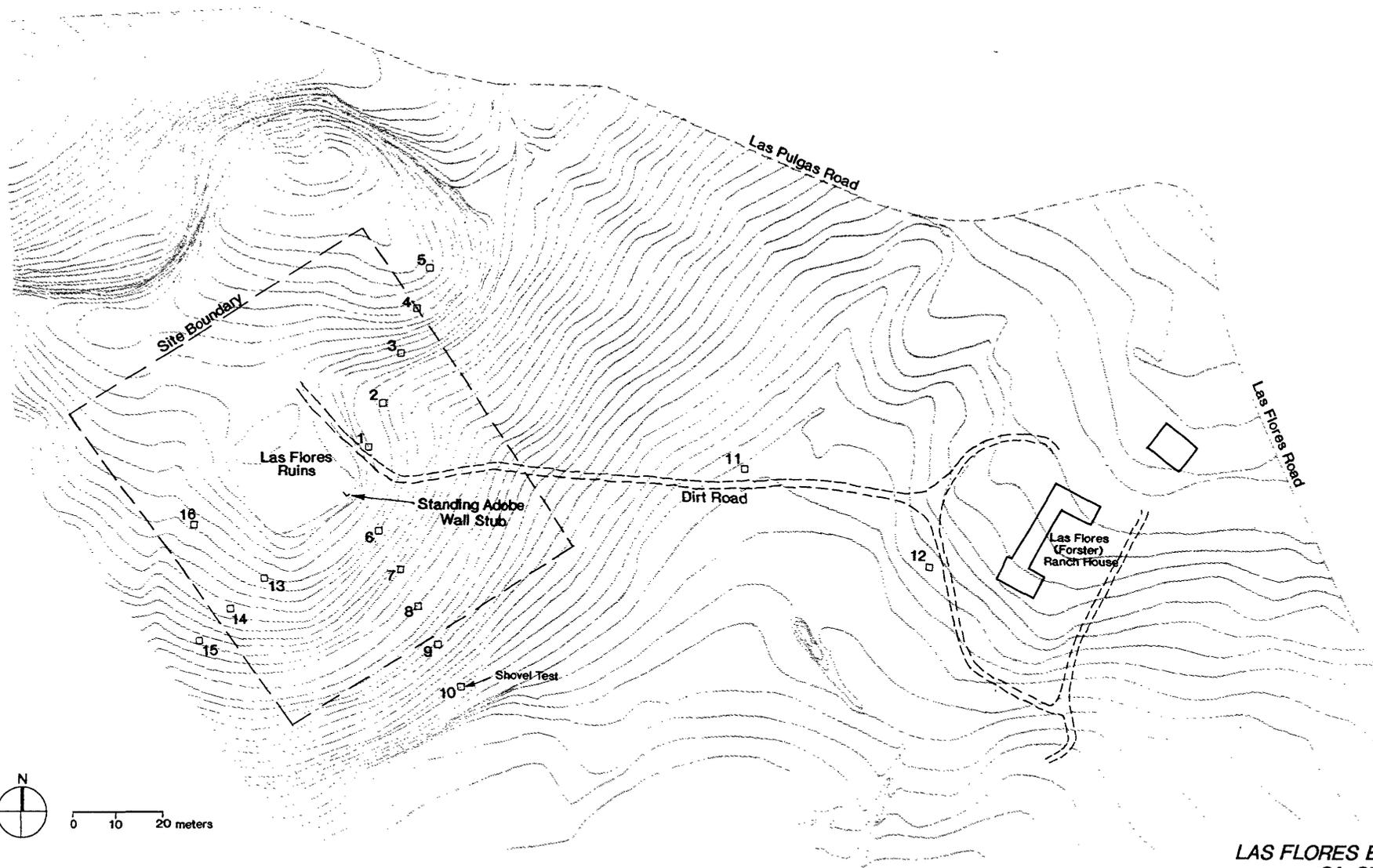
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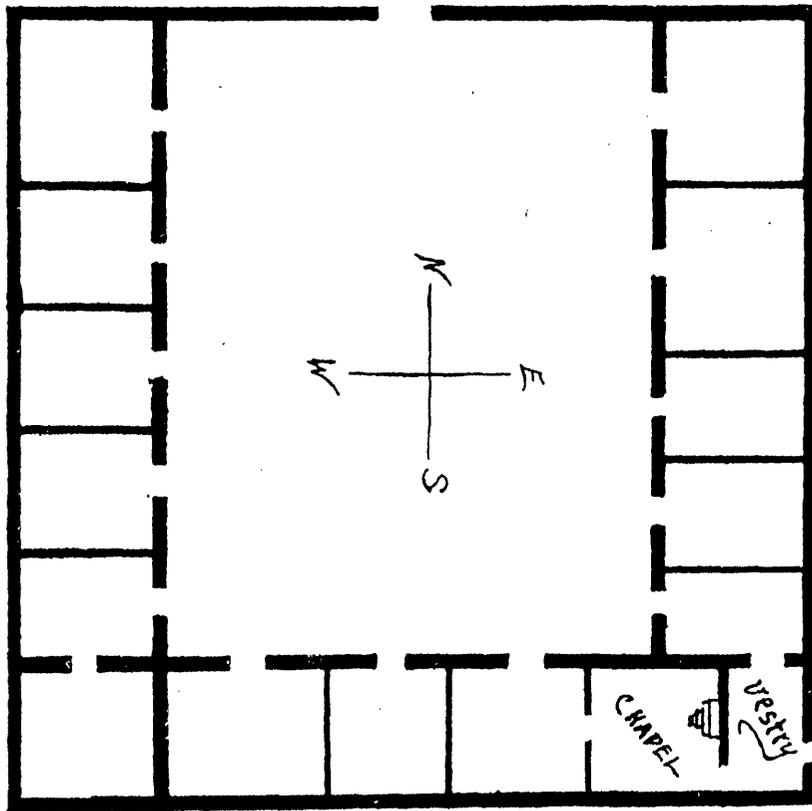
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to the northeast. This would have been behind the *estancia* and may suggest that this was the mostconvenient location of trash disposal. Shovel tests at distances greater than 80 meters were generally negative or only contained later American Period remains.

No evidence of outlying architectural features were observed beyond the limits of the compound. The 1850 sketch of the mission shows a small building to the front of the *asistencia* near the bell tower; possibly a small well, reservoir, or shrine. Both this structure and the bell tower were reduced to only a low mound of adobe by the time the 1872-75 photograph was taken. Foundations of both may still be preserved under the present surface.



LAS FLORES ESTANCIA
CA-SDI-812H



LAS FLORES OR SAN PEDRO

Source: Englehardt 1921:106.