

S.P. #24

Reg #4

GENERAL VALLEJO'S HOME  
(Summary by John Samuel Fox)

General Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, "The Autocrat of the North," enjoyed practically undisputed rule of the territory north of San Francisco Bay during the last decade of California's history as a Mexican province. Son of an army officer, he was born at Monterey on July 7, 1808. Young Vallejo received a fairly good education for his time, and eventually learned to read French, Latin, and English as well as his native Spanish. While still in his teens, he entered the army where his activities as an Indian fighter earned him rapid promotion. By 1832, Don Guadalupe was comandante of San Francisco, protector of the northern frontier. Two years later he was advanced to the rank of lieutenant and given Misión San Francisco Solano to secularize.

In 1834, Vallejo moved his family to a two-storied adobe he had built next to the mission. The next year he was confirmed as comandante militar of the northern frontier, and appointed director of colonization with orders to found a town at Sonoma. He did his task well. The Indians were pacified, colonists came to the new country to engage in agriculture and cattle-raising, and the settlement flourished.



Everywhere Vallejo's word was law. No one, not even the governor of the province, could dispute his authority. He ruled as a benevolent feudal lord, at the height of his power from 1835 to 1845. Although during this period he was promoted to a colonelcy and named military commander of the entire province, he restricted his activities largely to the area north of Monterey.

At length, after more than a decade of peaceful existence, the Bear Flag incident and the United States invasion shattered the quiet of Sonoma. After independence and the admission of California to the Union, General Vallejo, as he was called, decided to build a new home. This was Lachryma Montis, Tear of the Mountain, named after the large crystal-clear spring on his property.

Construction was begun in 1852. With materials brought from all over the world and labor scarce and expensive, the cost of the dwelling has been estimated at 50,000 dollars. Tapestries, paintings, hand-carved furniture, rich carpets - everything was designed to make the place as inviting, pleasant and luxurious as possible. Besides the main building, a Swiss chalet was imported piecemeal, shipped around the Horn, and rebuilt on the ground. Near the house were elaborately landscaped gardens, and the whole was placed in a setting of extensive vineyards and orchards.



At Lachryma Montis, General Vallejo spent his declining years. Although he was still prominent in Sonoma, his importance in California politics rapidly dwindled. He remained, as always, a most genial host and colorful personality. Vallejo's powerful wings had been clipped by the new regime, but he always approved of the results of the eventful years from 1846 to 1848. On the morning of January 18, 1890, Señor Don Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo died in the presence of his aged wife and many children.

Lachryma Montis remained a show place of Sonoma. Its sturdy redwood timbers withstood the ravages of time, and it was kept in a fairly good state of repair by one of the general's daughters. In time it was acquired by the State for preservation as one of California's historic monuments, and is maintained in much the same condition as the genial Don Guadalupe left it.



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GENERAL VALLEJO'S HOME <sup>22</sup>

By John Samuel Fox

~~(Approximately 50 word summaries by Esther Harlan)~~

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Harlan

General Mariano <sup>na</sup> Guadalupe Vallejo, born at  
Monterey, 1808, Commandante militar of San Francisco and  
the northern frontier and director of colonization, <sup>from</sup> 1832  
to 1846, founder of the town of Sonoma, <sup>in</sup> 1835, senator in the  
first State legislature, 1850, built this home in 1852  
and lived here until his death, January 18, 1890.

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