

Estudillo House
Oldtown, San Diego,
San Diego County
California

HABS. CAL. 45
HABS
CAL.
37-0LTO

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of California #3.

Historic American Buildings Survey
Henry F. Withey, District Officer
407 So. Western Avenue.
Los Angeles, California

ESTUDILLO HOUSE
(Ramona's Marriage Place)
Oldtown, San Diego,
San Diego County, California

HABS. Call 45
HABS
CAL
37.0170

Owner: Estate of T. P. Getz, Oldtown, San Diego.

Date of erection: 1825

Architect:

Builder:

Present Conditions : Well preserved as recondition in 1910. Architect of reconstruction endeavored to rebuild the house to as near the designs of the original as photographs showed the original to be, but old photographs indicate that a few changes were made in the ridge lines of roofs and locations of windows. House is used partly as a Museum and partly for the sale of art objects and souvenirs to tourists.

Number of stories: One.

Materials of construction: Foundation probably of stone laid in adobe mortar, as was the custom of that period. Walls of sun-dried adobe brick, laid in adobe mortar and plastered both sides. Roof framing of undressed eucalyptus logs, connections fastened with rawhide thongs. Over the roofs of corridors are laid mats of caresa, a material much like bamboo, obtained from the Cuyamaca lake region, several miles north of Oldtown. Over this is laid the roof tile. New posts and lintel framing of porches is of milled and dressed lumber. Solid one-inch rough boarding cover the rafters of the house proper. Roofs of tile, floors of large brick tile. Tile of corridors are said to have been made at the Mission in 1775 and used for lining of an aqueduct across the San Diego river to the Mission.

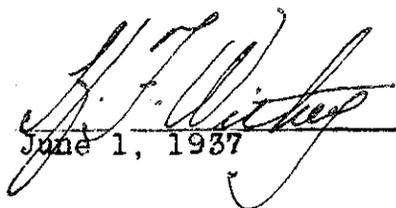
Other existing records: "California Missions and Landmarks, El Camino Real", by Mrs. A. S. C. Forbes, 1915, page 53. "The Old Mission Churches and Historic Houses of California" by Rexford Newcomb, 1925, page 310-317. "History of California" by Herbert Howe Bancroft. "History of San Diego" by William B. Smythe, 1909, pages 133 and 169. "Historic Spots in California, Southern Counties" by Hero Eugene Rensch.

Additional Data: This house was built by Jose Antonio Estudillo, son of Jose Maria Estudillo, one-time Commandante of the Presidio of Monterey. Jose Antonio succeeded Pio Pico as administrator of the secularized Mission of San Luis Rey. This house remained in possession of the family for three generations, or until 1887, when

Estudillo House
(continued)

Salvador Estudillo abandoned it, upon moving to Los Angeles. By neglect of the care-taker, the place was reduced to a ruin in the course of twenty three years. John D. Spreckles in 1910 caused the house to be restored to near its original state and entrusted the design and construction to Miss Hazel W. Waterman, architect. The house stands facing the ancient plaza of Oldtown where Gen. Fremont first officially planted the American flag upon Southern California's soil in 1846. The fact that Mrs. Helen Hunt Jackson made the little family chapel of the Estudillo's the Marriage Place of Ramona in her famous Indian novel of the same name, has given the house the romantic name of Ramona's Marriage Place, and it is better known by that name than by its more authentic title.

For the past twenty years the place has been in the possession of the late T. P. Getz, who has preserved it with care and gathered within its walls many valuable Spanish, Indian and early American relics.


June 1, 1937

W. F. W. W. W.