

= Ygnacio del Valle =

Ygnacio Ramón de Jesus del Valle (July 1 , 1808 ? 1880) was a rancher and landowner in the eastern Santa Clara River Valley , California , United States , as well as an alcalde of Los Angeles . His estate , Rancho Camulos , is registered as a National Historic Landmark .

= = Early life = =

Del Valle was born in Jalisco , Mexico . His father , Antonio del Valle , was a soldier in the Spanish army who came to California in 1819 and was mayordomo (administrator and / or foreman) of Mission San Fernando Rey de España . Ygnacio joined the army as a cadet in 1825 at the Presidio of Santa Barbara . In 1828 he was promoted to second lieutenant and transferred to the Presidio of San Diego . In 1832 , his commander became involved in a power struggle with the commandant of the Presidio of Monterey , where Antonio served . Ygnacio 's side won the conflict on the battlefield , causing a rift between father and son , and they never spoke again .

Ygnacio then moved to the Monterey Presidio and was in charge of the secularization of Mission Santa Cruz and Mission San Francisco de Asís . He became a trusted officer , enough to be left in charge of the Presidio in José Figueroa 's absence . For his service to the Mexican Army , del Valle received the Rancho El Tejon land grant in 1843 . During this time , he married Maria de Los Angeles in 1842 , who died in childbirth five years later .

= = Ranchos = =

Antonio died in 1841 without leaving a will . On his deathbed , he decided he wanted to reconcile with his son and , in a letter , offered Ygnacio several properties , including the 48 @,@ 612 @-@ acre (197 km2) Rancho San Francisco land grant he had received . Unfortunately , he died before the letter was delivered to Ygnacio , but the son returned to the family homestead to administer the ranch anyway . Without a will specifying how the estate was to be divided , Jacoba Feliz , Antonio 's second wife who remarried after his death , filed a lawsuit to claim part of the land , which was the site the first recorded discovery of gold in California , sparking a minor gold rush in 1842 , six years before the more famous California Gold Rush . Eventually , the lawsuit was decided and the land was split , with Ygnacio receiving the 13 @,@ 599 @-@ acre (55 km2) Rancho Camulos .

However , del Valle did not live on this land initially , instead residing in the Olvera Street area of Los Angeles , where he was active in local politics . In the 1840s , he served on the junta (the equivalent of a city council) as a member and its secretary , as well as treasurer of civil government under Governor Pío Pico . In 1850 , he was elected alcalde of Los Angeles and served only a short time before the city was incorporated as an American city , but during his tenure he established the Los Angeles Rangers , an early law enforcement group . After California achieved statehood later that year , del Valle served in the California State Assembly for a short period .

He was elected to a one @-@ year term in the Los Angeles Common Council in 1852 @.@ and was elected again in May 1856 but resigned in December of that year .

= = Marriage = =

In 1852 , at the age of 44 , he married 15 @-@ year @-@ old Ysabel Varela . Del Valle remained on the City Council for five years , after which he devoted his time to improving Camulos . The del Valle family , including five children , finally moved to the rancho in 1861 .

= = Later life = =

However , the late 1850s and early 1860s were difficult for ranchers in Southern California . Severe flooding had caused great damage to many ranchos . Despite this , the Del Valle family , like many Californios , continued to live beyond its means . Del Valle had to pay off the debts of his

stepmother , Jacoba Feliz , in return for which received part of her land inheritance . He had already sold off his Rancho Tejon to pay his own debts as well . The winter floods of 1861 @-@ 62 were followed by droughts which lasted for three years , which forced del Valle to sell off his remaining land . He was left with just 1 @,@ 500 acres (6 km ²) of his Rancho Camulos , but the ranch survived these hard times and became a thriving operation , the source of the first commercially grown oranges in Ventura County .

Through 1870 , the del Valles had seven more children , although only five of the twelve would live to adulthood . One , Reginaldo , became the youngest @-@ ever president of the California State Senate at age 28 and was instrumental in the preservation of Mission San Fernando , as well as the movement to have the El Camino Real marked with bells .

Ygnacio del Valle died in 1880 and was buried on his rancho . Ysabel took over the running of rancho until 1900 , then moved back to Los Angeles . In 1905 , the ailing woman " refused to die " until she could be reunited with her long @-@ dead husband . His remains were exhumed and moved to Los Angeles . Soon after their arrival , Ysabel died , and she was buried in the same coffin as Ygnacio . Their remains lie at Calvary Cemetery .