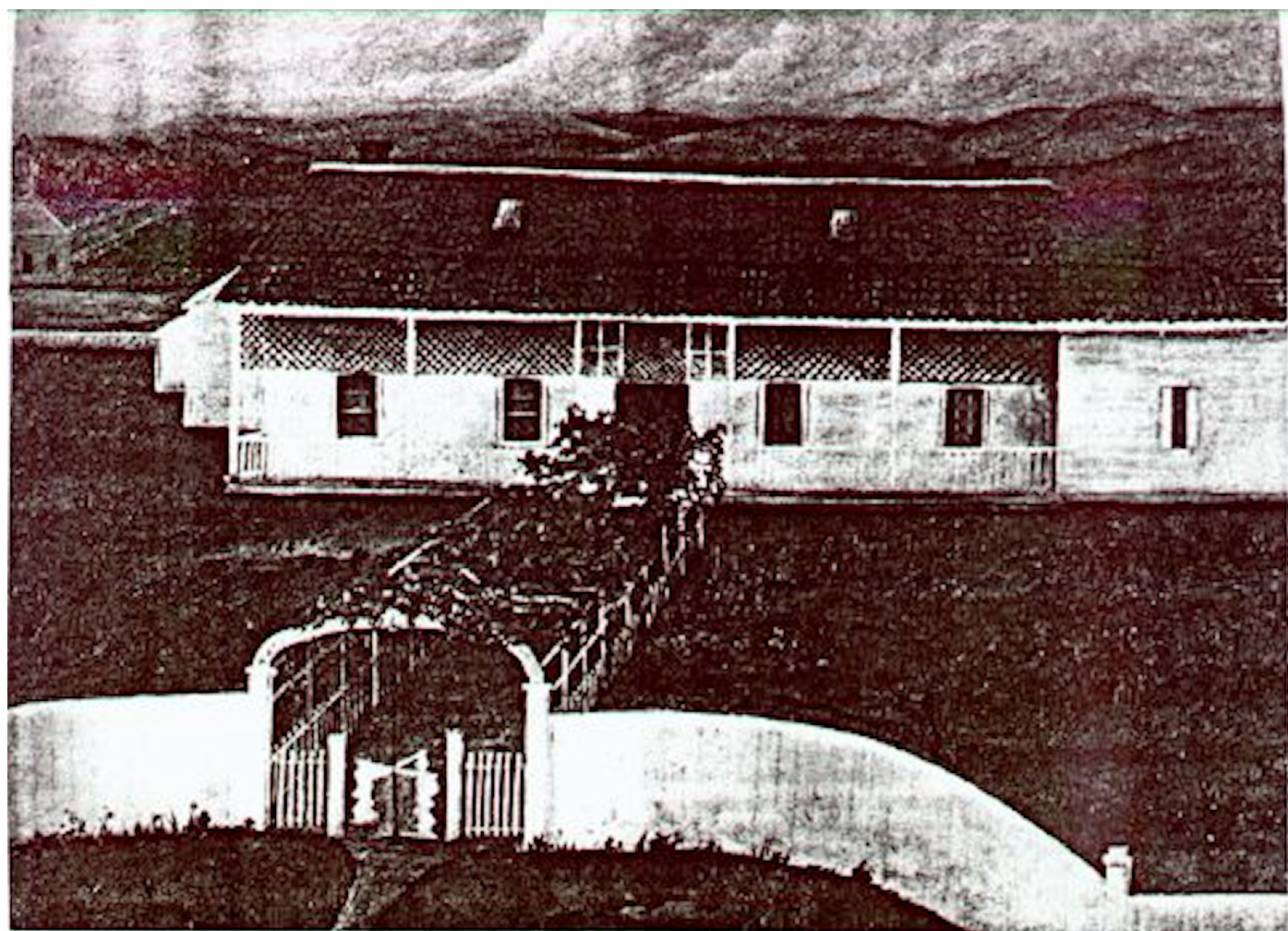




Digging for Hayward's City Hall in the 1920s uncovered foundation of this Castro adobe

DON GUILLERMO CASTRO

From The Sunday Tribune of Aug. 31, 1969

ADMISSION DAY this coming Sept. 9 will have a special meaning for residents of the Hayward, Castro Valley and Ashland region. The East Bay Regional Park District has chosen that day to dedicate its Don Castro Regional Recreation Area situated squarely in the midst of the old 26,722-acre Rancho San Lorenzo Alto.

Proprietor of this sprawling rancho was Don Guillermo Castro, soldier, surveyor, rancher, magistrate and father of seven at age 28. His land encompassed more than a township—about 41 square miles.

Unfortunately, Don Guillermo was a high-stakes gambling man who fancied Three-Card-Monte. That accounts for his opulent Rancho San Lorenzo Alto or Upper San Lorenzo Rancho being "fairly struck off . . . for \$400,-

000" at a forced sale Feb. 15, 1864. Sheriff J. A. Mayhew presided over the proceedings on the courthouse steps in San Leandro.

The buyer was Faxon Dean Atherton, wealthy New Englander and apostle of President James K. Polk's policy of "manifest destiny." He was the father-in-law of Gertrude Atherton, noted author and wife of George Atherton. Faxon's name lives on in the San Mateo County community of Atherton.

The fiscal undoing of Don Guillermo came when he was but 54. "Monte" Monteagle, ex-newsman now turned publicist, has dug up all these facts to add value to the East Bay Regional Park's move in establishing their new recreational area. He even points out that the Castro grant includes where the Park District's Cull Canyon Regional Recreational Area and the Anthony Chabot Regional Park are already situated.