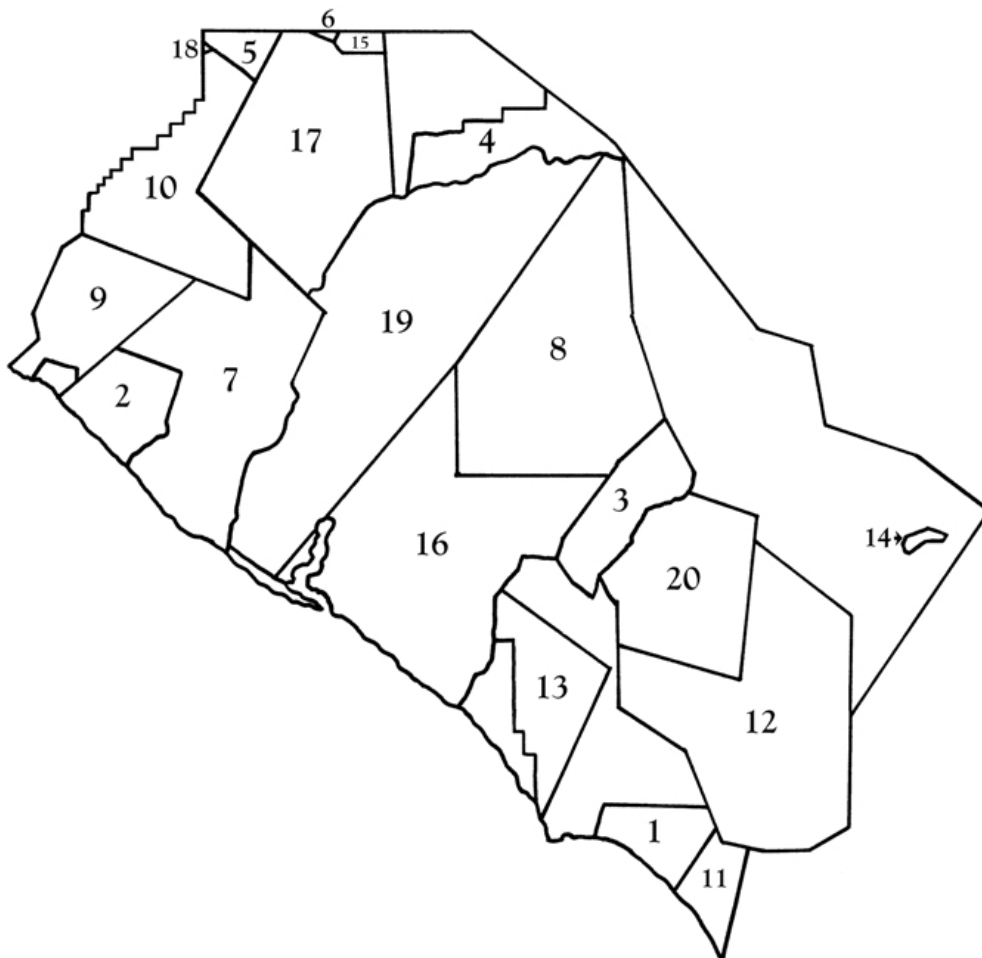


Spanish and Mexican Ranchos of Orange County

During the days of Spanish and Mexican rule in California (1769-1846), most of the area that would become Orange County was taken up by vast cattle ranches, or *ranchos*.

During Spanish rule (1769-1821) the ranchos were simply grazing concessions from the Spanish King. Manuel Nieto, a retired Spanish soldier, received the first of these concessions in what is now Orange County in October, 1784. It took in all the land between the San Gabriel and Santa Ana rivers, from the foothills to the sea. It was not until Mexican times (1821-1846) that the land was actually granted to individuals. At that time the Nieto Rancho was divided into five separate land grants.

After California became an American state, the Federal government established a Land Commission to review all the rancho grants and establish their exact boundaries. It was a long and expensive process that contributed to the decline of great ranchos.



- (1) *Rancho Boca de la Playa*. Granted to Emigdio Vejar on May 7, 1846. Patented at 6,607 acres.
- (2) *Rancho Bolsa Chica*: Originally a part of the Rancho Las Bolsas. Granted to Joaquin Ruiz on July 1, 1841. Patented at 8,107 acres.
- (3) *Rancho Cañada de los Alisos*: Originally granted to José Serrano on May 3, 1842, and enlarged by a second grant on May 27, 1846. Patented at 10,668 acres.
- (4) *Rancho Cañon de Santa Ana*: Granted to Bernardo Yorba on August 1, 1834. Patented at 13,328 acres.
- (5) *Rancho La Habra*: Granted Mariano Roldan on October 22, 1839. Patented at 6,698 acres that today is divided between Los Angeles and Orange counties.
- (6) *Rancho La Puente*: Granted to John Rowland and William Workman on July 22, 1845. Only a tiny portion of this 48,790-acre rancho reaches down into Orange County.
- (7) *Rancho Las Bolsas*: Originally a part of the Nieto Rancho. Granted to Catarina Ruiz on May 22, 1834. Patented at 33,460 acres.
- (8) *Rancho Lomas de Santiago*: Granted to Teodocio Yorba on May 26, 1846. Patented at 47,226 acres that became the northern end of the Irvine Ranch.
- (9) *Rancho Los Alamitos*: Originally a part of the Nieto Rancho. Granted to Juan José Nieto on May 22, 1834. Patented at 28,027 acres divided between Los Angeles and Orange counties.
- (10) *Rancho Los Coyotes*: Originally a part of the Nieto Rancho. Granted to Juan José Nieto on May 22, 1834. Patented at 48,806 acres largely in Orange County.
- (11) *Rancho Los Desechos*: Granted to Felipe Carrillo, 1846. Approximately 4,000 acres. Never submitted to the Land Commission or recognized by the U.S. Government.
- (12) *Rancho Mision Vieja*: Granted to Agustin Olvera on April 4, 1845. Also known as *Rancho La Paz*. Patented at 46,432.
- (13) *Rancho Niguel*: Granted to Juan Avila on June 21, 1842. Patented at 13,316 acres.
- (14) *Rancho Potrero los Pinos*: Granted to Juan Forster on April 5, 1846 along with two other small ranchos in Riverside County, *El Carriso* and *La Cienega*. Patented at 523 acres.
- (15) *Rancho Rincon de la Brea*: Granted to Gil Ybarra on February 23, 1841. Most of its 4,452 acres are in Los Angeles County.

(16) *Rancho San Joaquin*: Originally granted to José Sepúlveda on April 15, 1837, and enlarged by a second grant on May 13, 1842. Patented at 48,803 acres that became the heart of the Irvine Ranch.

(17) *Rancho San Juan Cajon de Santa Ana*: Granted to Juan Pacifico Ontiveros on May 13, 1837. Patented at 35,970 acres.

(18) *Rancho Santa Gertrudes*: Originally a part of the Nieto Rancho. Granted to Josefa Cota de Nieto on May 22, 1834. Patented at 17,602 acres almost entirely in Los Angeles County.

(19) *Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana*: Originally a Spanish concession, first occupied by Juan Pablo Grijalva around 1800, and later granted to his son-in-law and grandson, José Antonio Yorba and Juan Pablo Peralta on July 1, 1810. In 1839 the grant was confirmed by the Mexican Government. It originally contained more than 77,000 acres, with the Santa Ana River as its western boundary. But a flood in 1825 moved the river southeast, and the land between the old and new river beds was eventually allotted to the Rancho Las Bolsas. The final patent covered 63,414 acres.

(20) *Rancho Trabuco*: Provisionally granted to Santiago Argüello on February 16, 1841. Formally granted to Juan Forster on April 21, 1846. Patented at 22,184 acres.