

Ranchos

First established under Spanish rule, most ranchos in California originated via land grants that the Mexican government awarded after the breakup of the mission system (secularization) to former military and others loyal to the government. This led to the rancho period (1830s-1850s). While an intent of secularization was to return the mission lands to the indigenous, they mostly did not. It should be mentioned that rancho owners could only run their ranchos with the hard--and often dangerous--work of the indigenous. When California became part of the United States, rancho owners needed to prove that the land belonged to them. As it was a very costly and litigious process, most rancheros wound up selling off their land to pay their expenses. By the end of the 1860s, most of the ranchos in California had been broken up and sold to new owners.

RANCHOS IN SAN DIEGO REGION

