

Where was Dr. Lee's house located? Was it in the meadow? Was the meadow there 50 – 100 years ago, or was it forested?

Dr. Russell Lee bought much of the land here in 1941. Dr. Lee's house was not on the property that became Foothills Park; it was in the Portola Valley area off Los Trancos Woods Road. The only structure that is left over from when the park property belonged to the Lee family is the interpretive center; it was a barn in those days and was designed by Dr Lee's twin brother Admiral Paul F. Lee. When the city took ownership of the park it was first converted to use as a fire station and eventually into the interpretive center.

In the early days of Foothills Park there was a tea house in the area now called Orchard Glen Picnic area. Unfortunately the building was in disrepair and was dismantled as part of the original park construction work. The tea house had been bought and shipped from Tokyo, by Sanford Sachs (then the owner of the land) where it had been on display at the 1915 Panama Pacific Exposition. Most of the non-native plants in the Orchard Glen picnic area were planted by Sanford Sachs to impress his "society" guests

The only modern use that we know of for the meadow was as a meadow. It may have had trees on it on 100 years ago but documentation is scant; we have some historical photographs showing it as a field about 50 years ago. Wildhorse Valley was cleared of trees in the 1940's probably to make room for raising bay trees; it is possible that Las Trampas Valley was cleared at about the same time. Before that we really do not have much information. It is reasonable to me that prior to the arrival of European settlers, there were more trees in the field, which would have been removed to make better grazing areas and for timber for construction.

When the Spanish began settling this area (the late 1700's) California grizzly bears (*Ursus arctos californicus*) were trapped in the valley; which is where it got its name: Las Trampas (or the traps) Valley. The last California grizzly bear was shot in 1922 in Tulare County. Grizzly bears tend to prefer forested areas but are often found in open areas when looking for food or water. It also seems reasonable to me that several hundred years ago the field may have had many trees in/on it. Portions of the valley may have been cleared to make access to pit traps much easier.