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Hampton Dunn

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MORENO COTTAGE WAS HONEYMOON NEST IN 1879

By HAMPTON DUNN

PENSACOLA -- Don Francisco Moreno was a prolific patriarch of Pensacola whose life stretched from the days of George Washington to the Reconstruction (1792-1882). He had three wives, his last was 16-year-old Mentoria Gonzalez; 27 children and 127 great grandchildren.

One Moreno daughter who had a front seat to history was Angela who was the wife of the Secretary of Navy for the Confederacy, Stephen Russell Mallory. Four of the Moreno sons gave their lives for the cause of the South in the Civil War.

Another daughter of whom Don Moreno was especially fond was Pearl (LaPerle). When she got married to Octavius H. Smith in 1879 her daddy presented the newlyweds with an attractive honeymoon cottage. The small Moreno cottage has been restored and today stands at 221 E. Zarragosa Street, just off famed Seville Square.

The little love nest contained only two rooms and an enclosed back porch. The young couple apparently needed no kitchen or dining room, since they ate with the Moreno family in the big house next door. The Smiths had one child born in the cottage. Later, another Moreno daughter, Corrine Fennel, owned and lived in the honeymoon haven. Presently the Moreno cottage is the office of an advertising agency, Dodson, Craddock and Born Advertising Inc., whose president Pat Dodson is a leader in Pensacola’s widespread historical preservation program.

The Moreno cottage stands on ground which has yielded innumerable artifacts from the early Spanish occupancy, dating to 1752.