

## Museum Text Wells Fargo Bank 1996

### More About Spreckles and Jackson

If Alonzo Horton is the father of modern San Diego, John D. Spreckles is San Diego's rich uncle. He came to San Diego in 1887 when a trip from San Francisco to Honolulu was cut short by supply problems. He fell in love with San Diego and spent the next forty years building the city and a large fortune. He was the primary force behind the 1915 California/Panama Exposition and the San Diego and Arizona Railroad. At various time in his life he owned the Hotel Del Coronado, the San Diego Electric Railway, The San Diego-Coronado ferry line and the Union-Tribune Publishing Company. The Coronado Yacht Club now occupies his magnificent former home near the Hotel Del Coronado.

Helen Hunt Jackson arrived in California in 1880. She was shocked by the deplorable condition of California's Mission Indians and spent the rest of her life fighting for the rights of Native Americans. In 1881 she wrote *A Century of Dishonor* which detailed the mistreatment and poor conditions faced by the native peoples of the American west. The book, unfortunately, was largely ignored. Undaunted, Jackson wrote the hugely successful novel *Ramona*. She intended the novel to do for the California Indians what *Uncle Tom's Cabin* had done for black slaves in the south. Instead, its most enduring effect was to create a collection of regional myths that stimulated the tourist trade. The legends became so ingrained in the culture of Southern California that they were often mistaken for actual history.