

## THE ORIGINAL OWNERS



*Maud Bowers Bourn Vincent and her husband Arthur Rose Vincent, image Muckcross House Research Library*

### MAUD BOWERS BOURN VINCENT AND ARTHUR ROSE VINCENT

**W**illiam Bourn, born in San Francisco and classically educated at Cambridge University, was the owner of the famous Empire Mine in Grass Valley, California, reputed to be one of the largest, deepest, longest and richest gold mines in California and it was said to have produced 5.8 million ounces of gold during California's great gold rush from 1850-1956.

Of the many wealthy families who moved from San Francisco to the Peninsula after the great earthquake in 1906, one of the most prominent was William Bourn and his wife, Agnes. The Bourns enlisted renowned architect, Willis Polk, to design and build a 36,000-square-foot Georgian residence, with 43 rooms and 17 fireplaces on their 700-acre country estate in Woodside on the shore of Crystal Springs Lake. They named it Filoli, which, to the Bourns, FI-LO-LI stood for Fight, Love, Live. To fight for a just cause; to love your fellow man; to live a good life was a credo that Bourn believed in.

Bourn often took his family to Europe and while on an Atlantic crossing in 1906, his daughter and only child, Maud, met Arthur Rose Vincent of Summerhill, Cloonlara in County Clare, Ireland. Arthur was an assistant judge for the British Foreign Office. Maud and Arthur Rose Vincent were married March 30, 1910 at St. Matthew Episcopal Church in San Mateo, a grand event covered worldwide.

As a wedding gift to the newlyweds, Bourn purchased Muckcross House and its surrounding 11,000 acres on the Lakes of Killarney in County Kerry, Ireland. The Bourns were frequent visitors to Muckcross and became enamored with the beautiful Irish country setting.

In 1924, as a gift for his daughter, Maud, Bourn had a Spanish Revival style mansion designed by the famous architect, George Washington Smith, and built overlooking the ocean and the crashing waves along the rugged shore in Pebble Beach on the 17-Mile Drive. "Asilo de L'Estrella" was the original name given to the house and it later became Villa Eden Del Mar, as it remains today. Smith is famous for his work in Santa Barbara and Montecito where he designed several well-known Spanish Revival style buildings.

On February 12, 1929, following an Atlantic crossing en route to California to visit her father, Maud Vincent died of pneumonia. In 1932, the Bourns and their son-in-law, Arthur Vincent, presented Muckcross House and the surrounding 11,000 acres of land to the Irish Nation as a memorial to Maud Bourn Vincent. The estate became the first national park in Ireland. Visited by thousands of tourists each year, the house and surrounding gardens are known as the Bourn-Vincent Memorial Park and the estate is known as the Killarney National Park.