

ISCO CALL, SUNDAY, JAN

RECLUSE HEIRESS WILL ENTER COURT

Mrs. Sarah L. Winchester, Mil- Cu
lionairess, Sues Contractor
E. W. McLellan

Woman Whose Pastime Is Mu Building Fantastical Homes Is Stanch Spiritualist

REDWOOD CITY, Jan. 9.—Sarah L. Winchester, heiress to the vast wealth of the Winchester arms company, has at last decided to throw her cloak of mystery aside.

Mrs. Winchester has started an action through her attorneys against E. W. McLellan of Burlingame, the contractor, for the purpose of securing 98 acres of land now held by McLellan and other defendants near Burlingame. The complaint alleges that the defendants' lease expired on the first of the year, but claims that they still hold possession of the property in question and refuse to give it up. Mrs. Winchester further avers in her complaint that the property was damaged by the removal of a quantity of gravel from the land and by the custom of allowing a herd of cows to graze upon it. She asks for rent amounting to \$25 and damages in the sum of \$300.

The present contention has arisen over a large tract of what was formerly marsh land near the polo field of Francis J. Carolan, the Burlingame clubman, and which was bought by Mrs. Winchester a number of years ago with the idea of erecting the finest country home in the west.

An immense concrete seawall was constructed to keep out the encroaching tides of the bay, the man who is now being sued by Mrs. Winchester carrying out the work. Throughout the entire tract of land a costly system of canals with proper floodgates was constructed through which the Winchester private fleet of launches and yachts were to wend their way.

An avowed spiritualist, Mrs. Winchester soon became tired of her costly toy and after constructing a boathouse and erecting a huge mountain of earth upon which the mansion was to be erected where it could overlook the entire canal system of the estate and the bay, work was stopped. San Mateo, Fair Oaks and San Jose then came to know of Mrs. Winchester, although her existence was skeptically regarded, so seldom was Mrs. Winchester seen.

Through all the years that she has been a resident of California, Mrs. Winchester has retained her property acquiring mania, ever being on the verge of completing elaborate country cottages or fantastical palaces. San Jose has known her longest, where Mrs. Winchester remains today secluded in her mansion on the Los Gatos road, surrounded by trusty oriental servants, the grounds being further guarded by a pack of bloodhounds. Believing that if she ever completes the construction of the home in which she lives her death will shortly follow, the lonely heiress to millions has found her sole pleasure during the last seven years in directing the efforts of workmen who are called upon to construct one month what they destroy the next.

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