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# NOTICIAS del PUERTO de MONTEREY

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**Sebastián Vizcaíno and His Descendants:  
1548 to the Present**

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***Noticias** c/o Shelley McCabe  
Monterey History and Art Association  
5 Custom House Plaza  
Monterey, CA 93940.*

*shelley@montereyhistory.org [831] 372-2608 ext. 13.*

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## Editor's Preface

*It is indeed shameful that a man who gave so much to establish Alta California as a center of interest in the world has been virtually forgotten by its inhabitants and government.*

Dr. W. Michael Mathes, presenter at the MHAA Vizcaíno Symposium, December 2002

In December 2002, as part of the festivities commemorating the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the naming of Monterey and the first sustained European exploration of the region, the Monterey History and Art Association was honored to host Dr. W. Michael Mathes as one of four presenters at a day-long symposium organized by Tim Thomas. As the world's foremost authority on the Spanish merchant-explorer Sebastián Vizcaíno—who named Monterey Bay and staunchly promoted a settlement effort that did not get underway until 167 years later—Dr. Mathes does us additional honor in the pages that follow by sharing the results of several decades of research into Vizcaíno's multifaceted career, as well as the careers of his myriad descendants across the centuries.

Concurring with Dr. Mathes that Vizcaíno's importance is still under-recognized in the state of California, the *Noticias* Editorial Committee finds it fitting to conclude the journal's 2003 publication cycle with this essay. Our winter 2002 issue (*Noticias* LV:4) featured a re-edited version of journals recorded during Vizcaíno's voyage from San Diego to Cape Mendocino and back to Acapulco. The present essay, **"Sebastián Vizcaíno and His Descendants: 1548 to the Present,"** offers an ideal complement to that dramatic first-hand account by detailing what is known to date about the explorer's origins, his activities before and after his sojourn in Monterey, and the identity and destiny of his prolific descendants right up to the present day.

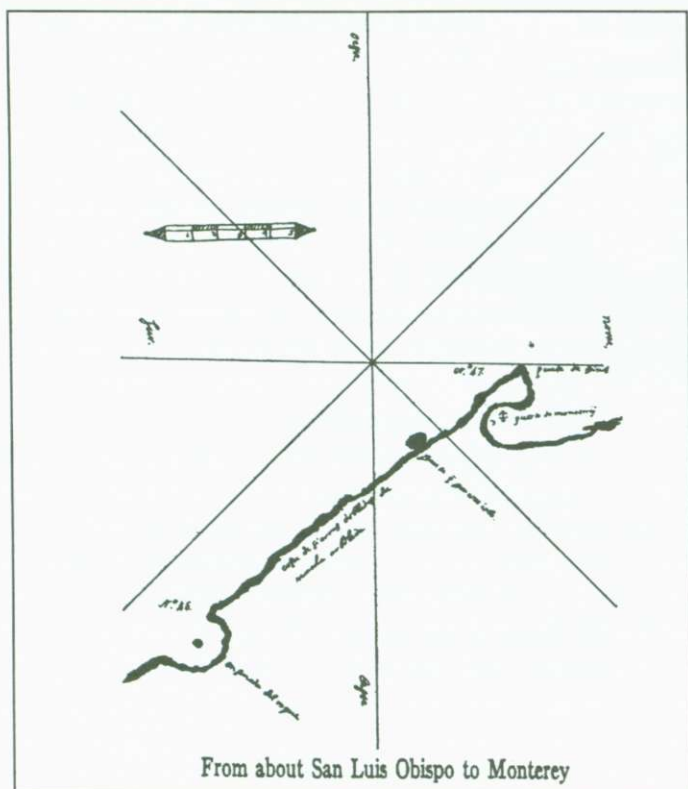
Like any piece of writing that emphasizes genealogy, particularly one that succeeds in spanning so many centuries, this essay is replete with personal and place names. The Spanish tradition multiplies surnames by using both patronym and matronym. For example, Sebastián Vizcaíno's eldest son and namesake is technically Juan Vizcaíno Martínez, the last name in the sequence being his mother's paternal surname. In a period when lineage was intimately linked to power, wealth and prestige, it is notable how many of Sebastián Vizcaíno's descendants married into families with venerable surnames like Ponce de León, Lezama, Altamirano, and Reynoso. Some families reinforced their

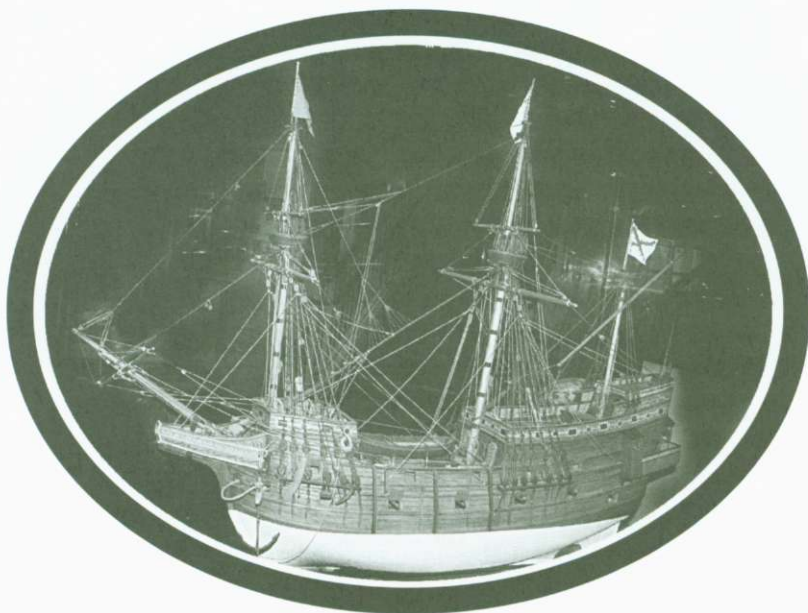
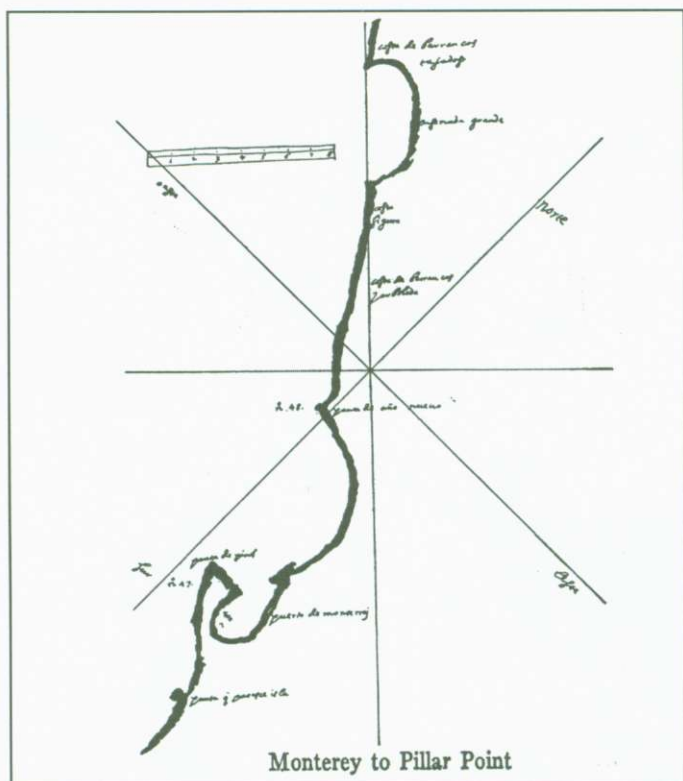


prestige by retaining an extended list of patronyms and matronyms over multiple generations, accumulating an ever-longer string of surnames (Juan Bravo Vizcaíno Urrutia de Contreras is an example that appears in the following account) while others were strategically selective in the names they chose to perpetuate.

With the author's gracious permission, the elaborate footnote apparatus intrinsic to a work of scholarship as ambitious and meticulous as this one has been reduced to a list of sources. The repositories have been listed in Spanish at the author's request. (A full set of citations may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to the Managing Editor.) To make this treasure-trove of new information fully accessible to *Noticias* readers, we have translated Spanish terms used by the author [in brackets], added a glossary, and annotated a contemporary map of Mexico (centerfold). Below and opposite are the first maps of the Monterey coastline, along with a model of Vizcaíno's ship. We expect that our alert readers will enjoy spotting the anachronisms in the cover photograph!

—Julianne Burton-Carvajal, General Editor







## FIRST MASS IN CALIFORNIA

FOURTH CENTENARY

1602-2002

# Sebastián Vizcaíno and His Descendants: 1548 to the Present

by W. Michael Mathes  
El Colegio de Jalisco, Zapopan, Mexico

## From Spain to New Spain

Publications by three pioneer historians of Spanish California—Herbert Eugene Bolton (1907), Charles Edward Chapman (1916), and Henry Raup Wagner (1929)—established a prejudice against the figure of Sebastián Vizcaíno (c.1548-1624). This prejudice has been perpetuated by later historians who have based their writings largely upon these three authors. The view thus formed characterizes Vizcaíno as an inept minor merchant who, by virtue of convenient connections and unrealistic promises, was able to perpetuate his incompetency and, in the case of Alta California, to befoul geographical concepts of the area that had been clearly established by his predecessor, Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo. Recent in-depth research has shown these judgments to have been speculative and incorrect. In fact, Vizcaíno was a highly trusted servant of the Crown whose long career was hardly characterized by incompetency and opportunism.

Sebastián Vizcaíno was born about 1548 in Extremadura, a region of west-central Spain that produced a large number of explorers and settlers of the Americas. His family, of moderate means, was of the *hidalgo* class—that is, capable of demonstrating many generations of service to the Crown and to orthodox Roman Catholicism.

With the succession of Felipe II to the Portuguese throne in 1580, Vizcaíno performed his first major service to the Hapsburg monarchy by leading a troop of cavalry in the occupation of Portugal, with the cost of the soldiers' pay and equipment borne by his father. Upon his return from Portugal in 1583, Vizcaíno, like many young men of his era, sailed for New Spain in search of new opportunities and adventures. In Mexico City, he became a highly successful merchant-investor, marrying Magdalena Martínez Orejón, also a member of the Spanish *hidalguía*. On December 15, 1585, his first descendent—daughter Ana—was baptized in Mexico City at the Sagrario Metropolitano.



## The Phillipines and the Californias

Because that period saw a temporary lull in expansion of the Viceroyalty of New Spain, however, greater possibilities offered themselves in the recently conquered Philippine Islands. In 1586, Vizcaíno departed Acapulco for Manila where, for three years, he conducted business and served as a member of the port militia in Spain's gateway to the Orient.

He returned to Mexico City in 1589 with sufficient merchandise (commonly sold at 500%-1000% profit) to finance his ventures there. On May 3, 1590, again in the Sagrario Metropolitano, Licenciado Bautista de Mendieta baptized Juan, the first son of Vizcaíno's marriage. Several months later, on January 13, 1591, in the same church, Vizcaíno served as godfather of a "child of the church"—probably his natural son, who received his same baptismal name, Sebastián.

The birth of Lorenzo, the second son of the marriage, coincided with the period when Vizcaíno was beginning to invest in the development of the Californias, an area generally neglected since initial exploration by Fernando Cortés, Francisco de Ulloa, Hernando de Alarcón, and Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo half a century earlier.

Settlement of the Californias in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century was boosted by the hope of great wealth to be obtained from the fabled pearl fisheries in the Gulf of California. On August 7, 1585, Royal Accountant Hernando de Santotis and his partners had been granted a license to fish and trade for pearls during a period of ten years. By 1592, however, no move had been made to exercise this privilege. On July 29<sup>th</sup> of that year, Vizcaíno and his partners solicited the transfer of the license from the Royal Audiencia in Mexico. Less than a year later, on July 9, 1593, the license was granted for a period of four years, beginning March 1, 1594. Vizcaíno was unable to mount an expedition immediately due to the failure of several of his partners to meet their financial obligations. Then, in 1595, criminal charges were brought against the master of his ships, Sebastián Pérez del Castillo, and in early 1596 some of his partners declared bankruptcy.

Despite these problems and delays, Vizcaíno was able to outfit three ships in Acapulco. With his six-year-old son Juan aboard, he sailed from that port on June 15, 1596. Reprovisioning along the coast of New Spain, the expedition reached Cabo San Lucas on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, and from there proceeded up the Gulf of California to the bay reached by Fernando Cortés in 1535, named La Paz by Vizcaíno on September 13<sup>th</sup>.



A settlement was established at the present site of the city of La Paz and, in October, Vizcaíno explored the gulf in search of pearl oyster beds and appropriate sites for settlement. A fire that consumed the majority of the structures at La Paz on October 21<sup>st</sup> prompted the return of most settlers to New Spain a week later, but Vizcaíno continued exploring the gulf until November 16<sup>th</sup> when the heavy storms common during that season, and fear on the part of the crew, forced his return to New Spain.

Vizcaíno's failure to establish a settlement and commercial base in peninsular California on this first voyage was hardly the result of incompetency. Despite heavy financial losses, he petitioned for an extension of his license in order to make a second voyage. At the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, however, Spanish interest lay in the outer (Pacific) coast of California and in finding a safe port for galleons on their long run from Manila to Acapulco. The successive failure of Francisco Gali, Pedro de Unamuno, and Sebastián Rodríguez Cermeño to chart the coast and establish such a port on their return trips from the Orient led to recommendations by Viceroy Luis de Velasco, on November 7, 1597, that Vizcaíno be given the command of an exploring expedition to Alta California. In 1601, the Conde de Monterrey appointed Vizcaíno general of an expedition to sail from Acapulco northward. On March 2, 1602, he ordered Vizcaíno to map the coast in detail, determine a port for the Manila galleons, and establish permanent, definitive place names with detailed descriptions to clarify navigation of the area.

Sailing from Acapulco on May 5, 1602 with three ships—again with his son Juan, now twelve years old, as part of the crew—Vizcaíno reached Cabo San Lucas in June. Continuing along the coast against contrary winds and currents, he finally reached San Diego on November 10<sup>th</sup> and Monterey on December 13<sup>th</sup>. He gave both these bays—as well as intervening islands, bays, and points of land—their permanent names, while retaining the previously established and clearly identifiable names of Cabo San Lucas and Cabo Mendocino.

At Monterey, it was decided that those sailors too ill from scurvy to continue the voyage should return to New Spain with one of the ships. On January 4, 1603, Vizcaíno continued north in heavy fog and intense cold. Two weeks later, having suffered two broken ribs in a storm off Cape Mendocino, with most of his crew disabled from scurvy, he concluded that the expedition should return to New Spain.

His ship reached Acapulco on February 21<sup>st</sup>. On March 28<sup>th</sup>, Vizcaíno was greeted in Mexico City by the Conde de Monterrey, who received his reports, maps, and sailing directions. After hearings relative

to the voyage, the expedition came to be considered a major success, as would be confirmed in later years.

As a result of Vizcaíno's accomplishments, the Conde de Monterrey appointed him general of the Manila galleons in 1603, a post that would permit him to enjoy the large profits possible in the Manila trade, and ordered him to settle Monterey Bay as a port for trans-Pacific navigation. Replacement of the Conde de Monterrey by the Marqués de Montesclaros the next year caused a suspension of these orders, notwithstanding the receipt of a Royal Order of July 30, 1604 confirming Vizcaíno's appointment. Montesclaros replied to the Crown that he would name Vizcaíno as general in 1606 and, in the interim—on April 9, 1605—had appointed him Chief Magistrate of Tehuantepec. During this term, Vizcaíno supervised construction of a road begun by Fernando Cortés from Coatzacoalcos in the Gulf of Mexico across the isthmus to Tehuantepec on the Pacific, a road designed to facilitate transport of materiel and merchandise between the two seas.

## First European Ambassador to Japan

Esteem for Vizcaíno's labors continued to be high, and on May 8, 1606 he was recommended by the Audiencia of Mexico for a naval, judicial or treasury post. A Royal Order dated August 6<sup>th</sup> granted him the title of general of Manila galleons in 1607 and again ordered the settlement of Monterey Bay. As a further reward, another grant by Royal Order of August 19, 1606—confirmed by Royal Order of April 20, 1607—granted him the vacant *encomienda* (allotment of Indian labor) in the province of Avalos, incorporated into the jurisdiction of New Galicia through a Royal Order of April 27, 1575. The *encomienda*, confirmed by Royal Order of June 3, 1607, was to remain in effect for two generations and to produce 2,000 *pesos* per year revenue and a lifetime annual pension of 10,000 *pesos*, in addition to a single payment of 4,000 *pesos*.

The former order arrived too late for execution, however, because Vizcaíno had sailed for Spain. Departing Spain on December 21, 1607, he returned to New Spain on March 21<sup>st</sup> of the following year with the confirmation of his *encomienda* and pension. Writing the Crown from Mexico City on June 10, 1608, he strongly recommended the establishment of a settlement at Monterey and, in preparation, transported material from Veracruz to the Pacific over the Coatzacoalcos-Tehuantepec road that he had constructed.

Interest in Japan and the fabled *Islas Ricas de Oro y Plata* (Islands Rich in Gold and Silver) predominated, however, with the



support of the Royal Attorney General of Manila, Fernando de los Ríos Coronel. This interest was furthered by the shipwreck of the former governor of the Phillipines, Rodrigo de Vivero, in Japan in 1609, an event that allowed him to open talks with Shogun Tokugawa Iyeyasu for establishment of trade with New Spain and for sending mining technicians to Japan. Vivero's return to Acapulco in October of 1610, and his lengthy reports to the Crown relative to the advantages of establishing Spanish economic and religious hegemony in Japan, confirmed the change in policy from settlement of a port in California to the Islas Ricas and Japan.

This change did not eliminate Vizcaíno's role, however. As the most experienced navigator and explorer in the Pacific, he was appointed the first official European ambassador to Japan in 1611. Sailing from Acapulco on March 22<sup>nd</sup> of that year, again with his son Juan, the ambassador reached Uraga on June 10<sup>th</sup>. Succeeding months were spent in negotiations with Iyeyasu and his minister, Hidetada. On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, Vizcaíno sailed from Uraga to chart the Japanese coast. During this voyage, he became acquainted with the *daimyo* [warlord] of Sendai, Date Masamune, and his Franciscan advisor, Fray Luis Sotelo, an active and zealous missionary. Following the completion of sixteen charts of the coast, Vizcaíno returned to Uraga on December 4<sup>th</sup>.

The overt courtesy of the Japanese notwithstanding, the time was not propitious for Vizcaíno's embassy. Spain desired a guarantee of free evangelization in Japan as a *sine qua non* for the opening of trade and sending of mining experts, but Iyeyasu, who was not willing to bend on this point, began to show greater favor toward the purely commercial policies of Spain's enemies, England and the Netherlands. Vizcaíno recognized the anti-Catholic undercurrent, but the zealous Sotelo sought to return to Spain with representatives of Date to convince the Crown and Papacy to expand mission fields in Japan.

During most of 1612, Vizcaíno conducted negotiations, engaged in commerce, and prepared his ship for the search for the Islas Ricas. Sailing from Uraga on September 16<sup>th</sup>, he sought the fabled islands of silver and gold east of Japan until November 7<sup>th</sup>, when the poor condition of his ship forced him to return to port. Inspection of the vessel showed it unfit for return to Acapulco. In May of 1613, Vizcaíno was forced to agree with Sotelo's request to lead an embassy to New Spain under Hasekura Rokuyemon in order to obtain from Date a new ship built by the Englishman Will Adams.

Sailing from Sendai on October 27<sup>th</sup>, the party reached Acapulco on January 22, 1614. Although ill from the strain of three years' labor,



Vizcaíno warned of the danger to Christians in Japan, while Sotelo proceeded with his embassy to Spain and later to Rome, returning subsequently to Japan where he and many other Christians were martyred for their faith.

## **Retirement, Recall to Service, and the Renewal of the California Enterprise**

In 1614, at about age sixty-six and after over thirty years of activity, Vizcaíno retired to Sayula in the province of Avalos, where he held his encomienda. His retirement proved short-lived, however. The arrival of a Dutch fleet at Acapulco in October 1615, and Admiral Joris van Spilbergen's success in taking supplies with no resistance, resulted in Vizcaíno's being called to command a detachment of troops to patrol the coast of Nueva Galicia from Navidad to Mazatlán.

Observing Spilbergen's fleet off the coast, Vizcaíno and his son Juan, then twenty-four, set an ambush for the Dutch at Salagua. On October 11<sup>th</sup>, when Spilbergen and his men came ashore to take on water, they were repulsed. Suffering a loss of fifteen men, they were not only prevented from lying in wait for the Manila galleon but also forced to cross the Pacific to the Moluccas with limited supplies.

As a result of this action, Vizcaíno was named Chief Magistrate of Acapulco. While residing there, he donated 4,000 pesos for the construction of a church. Unfortunately, he also had problems with the Holy Office of the Inquisition. Having taken Juana de la Sierra, the orphaned daughter of an old comrade-in-arms from Manila, as a ward, he was accused of having received a vision from the Holy Spirit approving of the young girl's marriage to Alonso Miguel, a soldier at the port. These allegations were determined to be without foundation by the delegate of the Holy Office, Fray Joseph de Lorenzana, O.P., in February of 1619. Nevertheless, the elderly general found the climate of the port unwelcoming and, in 1619, retired to Mexico City, leaving his holdings in Sayula to his sons.

Family interest in the California enterprise continued, and the accountant of the Tribunal of Accounts, Martín de Lezama, husband of Ana Vizcaíno, negotiated the matter with his father-in-law. Nicolás de Cardona and Juan de Iturbe failed in their attempt at colonizing the peninsula in 1615. Sebastián Vizcaíno died in late 1624. Three years later—on December 17, 1627—Nicolás Vizcaíno de Lezama, son of

Martín and Ana, petitioned and received a license from viceroy Marqués de Cerralvo to continue his grandfather's enterprise.

In 1628, Nicolás explored the coast from Salagua to the Bahía de San Ignacio in Sonora, searching for an appropriate site for the establishment of a shipyard. He found such a place at Santiago de Escuintla, jurisdiction of Sentispac, near Acaponeta. Cutting lumber and making pitch in the forests of Tequepespa, Nicolás began construction of a 300-ton ship, while his father traveled to Spain under orders of Visitor General Martín Carrillo Aldrete.

Upon his return, the royal accountant was robbed and given three dagger wounds by his carpenter, Francisco de Ortega, along with the carpenter's brother Hernando de Ortega, and others who, after their arrest, were released in Jala only to assault the accountant again in Tepic and Zapotlán. Because of these setbacks, the Lezamas had to abandon their enterprise. They attempted to reclaim their rights to California again in 1629 but, after his father's petition was denied, Nicolás retired to Guadalajara with his wife Isabel and dedicated himself to family affairs.

## Successor Generations

During the same period, captain Juan Vizcaino, heir to the encomienda of Avalos, in compliance with the Royal Provision of 1583 that required *encomenderos* (holders of grants of Indian labor) in Nueva Galicia to reside in Guadalajara, settled in that city with his wife, Luisa de Mercado. Involved in family business, Juan sold cattle to Licenciado Juan Ximénez Calderón in 1627, and also contracted with Juan Ochoa for the shipping of quicksilver by mule train to his brother-in-law in Ostotiquipac.

The sudden death of Juan's wife Luisa in 1628 resulted in his arrest, due to accusations made by Blas de Magallanes, son of her first marriage. Despite his imprisonment, Juan continued the administration of his property. In 1630, he declared that, due to his imprisonment, he lacked access to his papers and consequently presented oral testimony of his income as well as his obligatory payments to the religious personnel in the towns of his encomienda and their tributaries. On June 16<sup>th</sup> of the same year, Magallanes declared that his accusation was in error and, begging the forgiveness of his step-father, obtained his release from prison.

In 1631, Juan manumitted his slave Viola and paid 100 pesos to her three-month-old son. This child's godfather was Antonio, a Japanese who had accompanied Sebastián Vizcaino on the return from his embassy



in the East. In all probability, Antonio was Vizcaíno's natural son. The sale of another slave occurred in 1632, when administration of the majority of the family property had passed to Juan's sons, Nicolás and Juan Bravo Vizcaíno, both born in Mexico City.

This administration was divided between the two brothers, with Juan residing in Sayula and Nicolás in Guadalajara. In 1643, the latter married Petronila de Zúñiga, daughter of the prosecuting attorney of the Audiencia, Diego de Zúñiga. Leaving the encomienda to his brother, Nicolás accepted appointment as chief magistrate of the Santa Hermandad (Holy Brotherhood) in Sentispac on October 25, 1650.

Two years later, Juan was again residing in Guadalajara, as was his brother, who had become a widower in 1654, with the property of his wife Petronila passing to their children Juan, Lorenzo and Agustina—all known by the family name of Bravo Vizcaíno Urrutia de Contreras. Three days prior to his death on January 25, 1658, Nicolás signed his last will and testament, leaving the encomienda to his eldest son, Juan, and a dowry for his mulatta slave María, the mother of his natural children. The remaining property was to be divided equally between the three offspring named above.

Upon the death of Juan Bravo Vizcaíno in 1659, administration of the encomienda continued under his widow, María de Contreras. Her son, Juan Vizcaíno de Contreras, owner of a hacienda in Zapotlán inherited from her parents, represented her interests in Guadalajara.

In 1675, the Vizcaíno family interest in California was revived with the failure of Admiral Bernardo Bernal de Piñadero's voyage into the Gulf of California. On October 25<sup>th</sup> of that year, Nicolás Vizcaíno de Lezama—married to Isabel de Reynoso y Altamiranno, holder of the *mayorazgo* (entailed estate) of Francisco de Medina Reynoso—petitioned for his grandfather's title and the dismissal of Bernal. He was seconded by Juan Vizcaíno Urrutia de Contreras, encomendero of Avalos, who requested reports regarding the enterprise on May 15, 1676. The matter went no further, however, since the Crown had already designated the religious order of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) for the occupation of the peninsula.

While always recognizing their relationship to the Vizcaíno family, members of the Lezama branch were more involved with the urban life of Guadalajara. Nicolás and Isabel had three children. Their daughter Juana married a Spaniard, Francisco Domínguez de Riesu, a native of Estella in Navarra. A notary, he was also secretary of the Royal Audiencia, a perpetual councilman, and chief constable of Guadalajara. Their son, *licenciado* Nicolás de Lezama Altamirano y Reynoso, a



lawyer before the Royal Audiencia from 1682 until his death in 1720, married María de Avila Bribiesca Ponce de León.

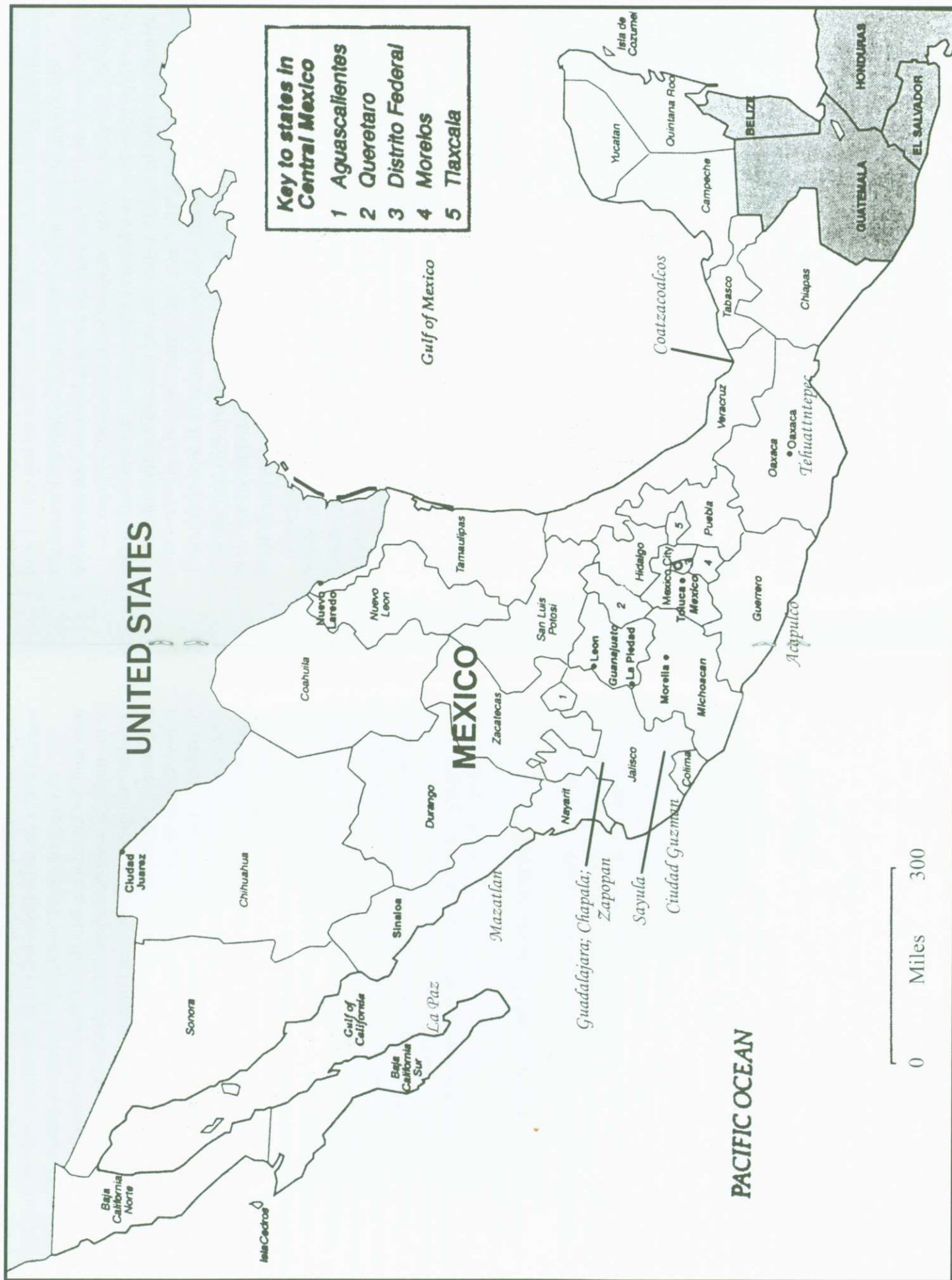
The second son of Nicolás and Juana, Lorenzo, became a merchant in Guadalajara. Married to María Rodríguez Viruete, a native of the mines of Jora, he fathered four sons and three daughters. Nicolasa, the eldest daughter, married Juan Baptista Sugade Bugueiro, chief magistrate of Ostotipac. Between 1755 and 1663, Juan Baptista's uncle, Mateo Sugade Bugueiro, was the powerful Archbishop of Mexico City. Shortly after the early death of Lorenzo in 1684, his widow María gave birth to a son, Vicente. She died in 1702, when her youngest child had reached the age of eighteen, having spent several years in a state of dementia.

In 1681, the heir to the Avalos encomienda, Juan Bravo Vizcaino Urrutia de Contreras, husband of María de la Parra Partida, moved permanently from his Guadalajara birthplace to his hacienda, called Buena Vista, in the Sierra de Tapalpa region near Sayula. He eventually initiated the transfer of the land to his eldest son, Nicolás Marcelino. In 1699, the latter ceded the *sitios* [grazing lands] of Salsipuedes and Los Pozos to his half-brother, natural son of Sebastián Vizcaino de Urrutia, thus carrying out the first formal division of family properties outside of the legitimate lineage.

## Termination of the Encomienda

In 1701, Nicolás Marcelino was residing in the province of Amula where he was owner of an hacienda, the San Pedro sugar mill, and the Santa Rosa cattle ranch. On the death of his father in 1719, the encomienda was terminated and transferred to the dukes of Atrisco. The title was conceded to José Sarmiento de Valladares, viceroy of New Spain, by Royal Order of April 17, 1708. In 1728, the new encomenderos began to receive the tributes of the Indian towns of Techaluta, Chapala, Teoquitlán, Zahualco, Amacueca, Tepec, Cocula and Atoyac.

Having lost a large portion of their lands in Sayula, as well as their rents, Nicolás Marcelino and his Sayula-born wife, María Camberos Villaseñor, made their home at the hacienda Buena Vista, also known as Santa María de la Sierra. A series of deaths—Nicolás Marcelino and eldest son Juan Baptista Marcelino in 1736, María Camberos in 1738, second son Nicolás Marcelino, without heirs, in 1739—left family properties in the hands of the eldest son's widow, Juana Gertrudis de Covarrubias Franco de Paredes, because her four sons (Nicolás Antonio,





Juan Joseph, Joaquín Antonio, and Gregorio Manuel, all born in Tapalpa) were still minors.

As a result of a suit brought by creditors, an appraisal was made of the properties in 1741. Juan Baptista's house, livestock and tools were valued at 6,567 pesos, 2 reales; those of his brother at 4,317 pesos, 2 reales. Three years later, as a result of this litigation, the widowed Juana Gertrudis, residing in Sayula, petitioned and received for her sustenance the rents and livestock of Hacienda Santa María de la Sierra.

The following decade, Nicolás Antonio, Juan Joseph, Joaquín Antonio, Gregorio Manuel and their two sisters, María Rita and María Antonia, now all of age, received their inheritance. One fifth of the hacienda went to each of the two brothers and the other fifth jointly to the two sisters. Later, Nicolás Antonio purchased the fifth belonging to Joaquín Antonio, who had moved to Guadalajara, and another fifth from his sisters. The land was then held by three of the brothers. By prevailing in litigation brought by Joseph Montes de Oca in 1767, Nicolás Antonio not only retained his lands but increased them. When his brother Joseph Antonio died in 1782, he inherited another fifth.

During five years, Nicolás Antonio and Gregorio Manuel maintained the by then very extended Vizcaíno family. Then, on May 11, 1787, Nicolás Antonio sold his four-fifths of the hacienda, complete with houses and 6,280 *varas* of stone fence, to his brother Gregorio Manuel for 2,900 pesos. The agreed-upon price was payable to him or to his son Vicente Ferrer, who married Estefana Velarde, a native of Zapotlán, the following August in Zapopan. At the time, Nicolás Antonio was serving as chief magistrate in Tapalpa, a post held until his death in 1791.

With Gregorio Manuel Vizcaíno's purchase, Hacienda Santa María de la Sierra again comprised a single entity. Nevertheless, due to the numerous families who depended upon it in one way or another, there was a decline in individual income and consequently in the well-being of family members. Married to Juana María García de Alba, a native of Ejutía, in 1758, Gregorio Manuel had five daughters and seven sons, five of whom survived infancy. Several of the children of Joaquín Antonio and his wife Ana María Francisca García Cobián, all born in Tapalpa, were also dependent upon the hacienda after the death of their father, who died "very poor" in 1802.

The last of these four brothers, Gregorio Manuel, died in 1804. At that time, the hacienda was also sustaining his daughter María Josepha Vizcaíno, her husband Sebastián Fabián de Brambila, a native of Tecolotlán, and their six children, in addition to two children of Joseph Rafael and his wife María Antonia Gómez, two children of Joseph María



León and his wife María Manuela Preciado y García, three children of José Toribio and his wife Ignacia Valdivia, and two children of Sixto and his wife Gertrudis Pérez Alancastre—for a total of twenty-five dependents of direct lineage.

Consequently, at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the hacienda was again divided, this time among Joseph Rafael, José María León, José Toribio, and Sixto, who had been left a widower on the death of his wife Gertrudis. The need to supplement family income was obvious by 1805, when José Toribio took the post of manager of the Tapalpa tobacco monopoly on June 8<sup>th</sup>. Together with his brothers José María León and Sixto, he mortgaged three parts of the hacienda for 5,000 pesos to cover his bond.

In 1808, Sixto was remarried to Petra Francisca Preciado Vásquez. From his new family, raised on the eve of Mexican Independence from Spain, six children survived, despite the smallpox epidemic that struck Tapalpa in 1815. These six children—together with Joseph Rafael's six, José María León's five, and José Toribio's thirteen—contributed thirty more persons to the total of those financially dependent on the hacienda, already subdivided into cattle *estancias* [large grazing tracts] and ranches.

In addition to these direct heirs, the children of Joaquín Antonio and their descendants also lived in the area. His grandchildren—offspring of a natural daughter, Patricia, as well as of his legitimate daughter María Guadalupe and her husband Bartolo de la Torre—depended upon the ranches known as Ojo de Agua, El Carrizal and Atemajac. Another grandson, Juan Nepomuceno de Jesús, married to Tomasa Corona, lived on the Las Piedras and Rincón Grande ranches.

From this branch of the family, the greatest success was attained by José Mirla Aniceto, son of Joaquín Antonio, husband of Ana María Bayardo, and owner of the Ojo de Agua ranch. As commandant of the Tapalpa militia in 1816, he purchased lands that included El Capulín and Arroyo Zapalotes, thus increasing his properties. He was widowed before 1821, when he remarried a woman named Dolores, daughter of his cousin José Toribio and Ignacia Valdivia. In 1847, he was considered “the richest man” in Tapalpa.



## Decline of the Family Fortune through Dispersal of Landholdings

During the 215 years between the granting of the Avalos encomienda to Sebastián Vizcaíno in 1606 and the consummation of Mexican Independence in 1821, the socio-economic situation of Vizcaíno's direct and indirect heirs changed markedly. In 1606, the encomienda alone produced 2000 pesos per year in rents, permitting a life of comfort for the encomendero and his relatives. Concomitant privileges included the acquisition of additional property, appointments and investments, marriage and *compadrazgo* (co-godparenting relationships) with other upper-class families, the maintenance of titles and honors, and appointments to influential political and bureaucratic posts. The family's vast landholdings, source and symbol of great wealth in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, were subject to subdivision by inheritance over the years until, in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they barely comprised small ranches and grazing lands that were at times insufficient to support their owners.

Reduced through divisions of property brought about by the natural increase in descendants over ten generations, the Vizcaíno family fortunes gradually diminished until in 1787, for example, four-fifths of their hacienda was valued at only 2,900 pesos. In 1791, the owner of the hacienda had to accept a middle-level bureaucratic post. In 1802, the brother of the hacienda-owner died a poor man. In 1805, as we have seen, the three principal owners had to mortgage a large portion of their interest in the hacienda to finance the bond for the appointment of one of their number to a post of minor importance.

## Conclusion

As an explorer and navigator, Sebastián Vizcaíno succeeded in establishing geographical knowledge that his predecessors had failed to acquire. His maps and descriptions, which remained the standard references for navigating the Californias until 1775, were used by such eminent explorers and colonizers as Gaspar de Portolá, Fray Junípero Serra, Miguel Constansó, Juan Pérez, Bruno de Hezeta, and Juan Francisco Bodega y Quadra. The place names conferred by Vizcaíno are still in use along the coast from La Paz south to Cabo San Lucas, and from that point north to Cape Mendocino.



Vizcaíno's service in Japan reflected deep insight into Japanese politics and foresaw the coming persecution of Christians. His work in Tehuantepec and Nueva Galicia received the praise of his contemporaries. The rewards granted Vizcaíno by the Crown clearly reflect his status as a major personage of his day; they would not have been conferred upon someone as opportunistic and inept as his detractors accuse him of being. These rewards permitted his descendants to enjoy lives of privilege and financial well-being for almost two centuries.

Four centuries have elapsed and the living descendants of Sebastián Vizcaíno, direct and lateral, number in the hundreds. As may be expected, they occupy every possible socio-economic position. Although with the advent of the Republic of Mexico, subsequent generations ceased to enjoy any benefits derived from their ancestor's service to the Spanish Crown, several have achieved high civic and economic status through their own efforts—particularly descendants in the areas of Sayula, Tapalpa, and Ciudad Guzmán in Jalisco, and in the state capital of Guadalajara, Mexico's second-largest city.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, two of Vizcaíno's direct descendants achieved not only national but international recognition for their writing. The first was noted bibliographer and historian Juan B. Iguíniz (1881-1972), a specialist in the fields of printing and the history of western New Spain and Jalisco. Iguíniz was a great-grandson of Ignacio Vizcaíno, grandson of Celso Vizcaíno and his cousin, Mercedes Vizcaíno, and son of María de Jesús Vizcaíno and José María Iguíniz. The second was a writer of fiction. Despite the fact that Juan Rulfo (Pérez Vizcaíno, 1918-1986) published only two slim volumes—a collection of spare short stories called *El llano en llamas* (*The Burning Plain*, 1953) and the haunting novel *Pedro Páramo* (1955)—he is widely acknowledged as source and inspiration for the great creative explosion of Mexican and Latin American fiction during the following decades. Into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the writer's youngest son, a filmmaker by the name of Juan Nepomuceno Carlos Pérez Rulfo Aparicio, known as Juan Carlos Rulfo, continues to perpetuate that venerable legacy with a series of award-winning films and videos, many set in the Sayula region, where his roots stretch back 400 years to his ancestor Sebastián Vizcaíno.





## Sources

This essay updates a previously published essay, "California's First Explorer: Sebastián Vizcaíno," (*Pacific Historian* 25:3, fall 1981) by incorporating the results of extensive archival research conducted over the intervening two decades at the following Mexican institutions: Archivo de Instrumentos Públicos, Biblioteca Pública del Estado de Jalisco, and Archivo de la Sagrada Mitra—all in Guadalajara; Archivo Público de Notarías and Archivo de la Parroquia de San Francisco, both in Sayula; archivos notariales de las parroquias de Zapopan and Ejutía; archivos del Sagrario Metropolitano in both Guadalajara and Mexico City; Archivo Notarial de la Parroquia de San Antonio in Tapalpa; Archivo Parroquial de Tuxcacuesco; Archivo General de la Nación in Mexico City. Sources examined include baptismal, marriage, burial and other church records; individual wills, manuscripts and protocols; the civil court archives of the Real Audiencia; and Libros de Gobierno.

The following published works were also consulted:

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## Glossary

- Audiencia*: royal court of appeal  
*compadrazco*: relationship of shared responsibility and assistance through the role of godfather and/or godmother  
*encomienda*: a grant of Indian labor  
*encomendero*: owner of an encomienda  
*estancia*: large estate of grazing lands  
*hacienda*: large multi-production estate  
*hidalgo*: nobleman (literally “son of someone”)  
*licenciado*: recipient of a degree given to clerics and other university undergraduates  
*mayorazgo*: entailed estate  
*peso(s)*: monetary unit equivalent to 8 *reales*  
*real(es)*: monetary unit equivalent to 12 *tomines*  
*sagrario*: a chapel attached to a cathedral  
*sitio*: grazing unit  
*vara*: (rod) a unit of measure equivalent to 33 inches

## Illustrations

*Front Cover*: Tableau of Vizcaíno and crew members staged at the Maritime Museum at Monterey’s Stanton Center on December 13, 2002. Left to right: Javier Chagoya, John Sanders, and Juan Díaz, all of the Naval Post-Graduate School; far right, Cheryl Carter of the Monterey History and Art Association. Photograph by Julianne Burton-Carvajal.

*Back cover*: Promissory note written in Japan on October 20, 1613, signed at lower left by Sebastián Vizcaíno, from the collection of W. Michael Mathes.

*pages 2,3*: Earliest maps of Monterey by Enrico Martínez, 1603. Morro Bay (San Luis Obispo) to Monterey Bay, and Monterey Bay to San Francisco Bight (Pillar Point).

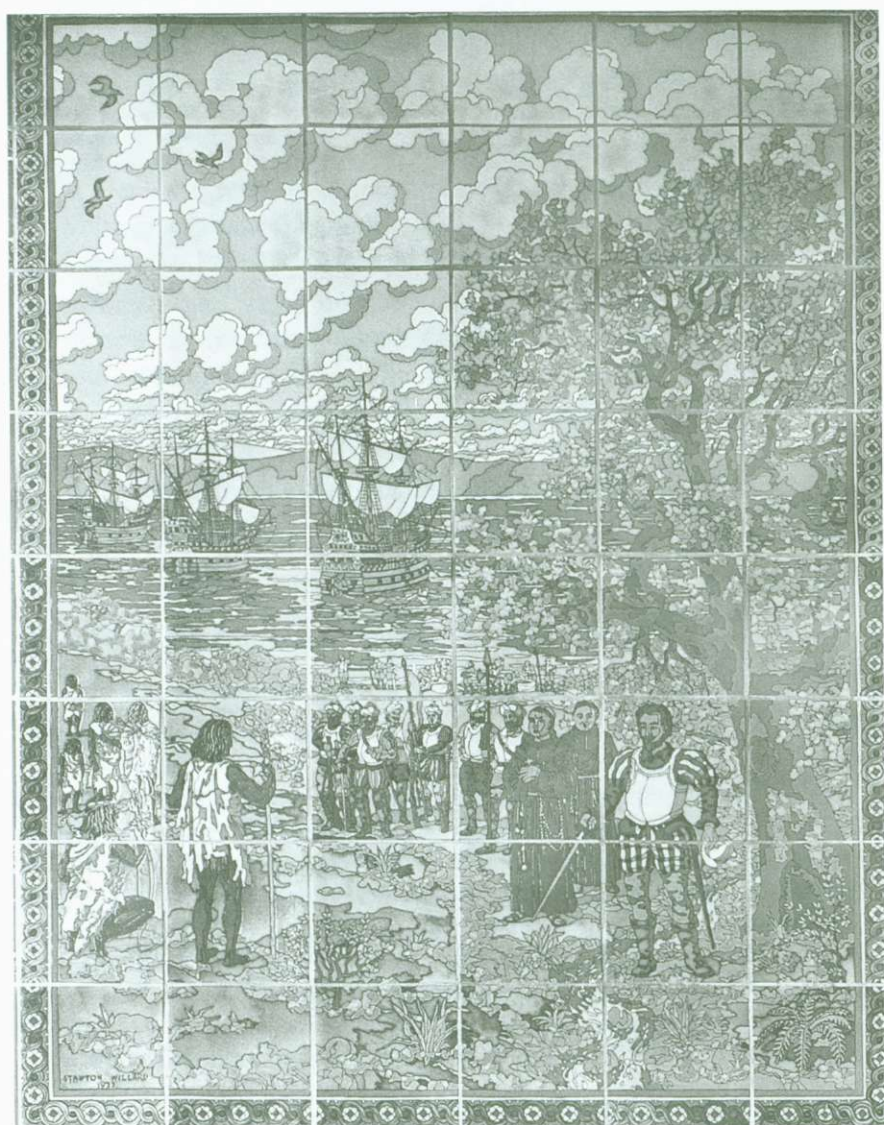
*page 3, top*: Replica by Charles Richmond of a ship similar to Vizcaíno’s, Maritime Museum, Stanton Center. Photograph by John Castagna.

*page 4*: Commemorative icon of the “First Mass in California” by Brother Claude Lane, OSB of Mount Angel Abbey, Oregon, commissioned by the Discalced Carmelite Friars, California-Arizona Province. Reproduced with permission.

*pages 14,15*: map of Mexico with ten key locations mentioned by Mathes added in italics.

pages 17, 19: tile panel from Gouverneur Morris, Monterey Museum of Art, La Mirada. Photograph by John Castagna.

below: Tile mural by Stanton Willard, Monterey Post Office, 1933.



THE LANDING OF  
SEBASTIAN VISCAINO  
AT MONTEREY  
DECEMBER 16, 1602



## BOOK REVIEW

**J.D. Conway. *Monterey: Presidio, Pueblo, and Port*  
Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2003.**

*Reviewed by John Walton*

*Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Davis*

Jim Conway's *Monterey: Presidio, Pueblo and Port*, produced in association with the City of Monterey, is a popular work designed to supersede standards such as Augusta Fink's *Monterey County* (1972) or Laura Bride Powers's *Old Monterey* (1934). Like these predecessors, Conway begins with the indigenous Ohlone people, traces three sovereignties (Spain, Mexico, United States), and ends with the contemporary "change of directions" from army town to tourist redoubt. The volume is richly illustrated with drawings, maps, and historical photographs.

There is much to recommend this attractive paperback to introductory audiences. It pays serious attention to both the Spanish and Mexican periods that established the context of colonization in Alta California and, later, the international trade influences on economic development. A chapter on the "era of disregard" (1850-1880) argues, but may not convince, that Monterey was not a backwater during the early American period. Perhaps the strongest aspect of the coverage is an emphasis on the military presence Monterey enjoyed from the establishment of the first Presidio to the closing of Fort Ord. In the concluding chapters, lower Alvarado Street comes down, the Monterey Bay Aquarium goes up, and the city turns to a service economy. All this is recounted in 150 well-designed pages.

Discriminating reader appetites may come away less than satisfied, however. The introduction announces this as a work of "new history:"

*The old history is consensus history, and it is the narrative most often repeated. However, there is a new history sweeping Monterey which conveys class, gender, and culture in a way that makes the old history archaic. (p. 8)*

Unfortunately, this distinction is not developed or made integral to the work. Who were the purveyors of old history and what exactly did they do wrong? What are the new histories sweeping town, and how have

they altered our understanding? What old ideas are discredited, what new ones demonstrated? What exactly does this book have to say about class or culture, for example?

Chapter 5, devoted to the alleged, “era of disregard,” does not deliver on the argument. According to Conway, “The ‘new history’ of Monterey tells us we need to view its history within the context of the rest of Gold Rush California,” an approach that will refute the “myth about the demise of Monterey.” (p. 66) But there is no indication of who created the myth, what it involved, and whose interests it served. What evidence exposes the myth for the perverse thing it is? Conway also informs his readers that:

*Monterey's urban and economic growth was much maligned following statehood [by whom?], but some of that information [which?] was misleading. Not only was Monterey's growth and economy better [by how much?] than reported [what? when? who?], but between 1850 and 1880, Monterey changed from a predominantly Hispanic town [in what proportion?] to a city managed by Anglo-Americans [how?]. (p. 71)*

The claims, old and new, are unclear and unsubstantiated. They may also be wrong. Contemporaries, not peevish historians, referred to nineteenth-century Monterey as “Sleepy Hollow.” Robert Louis Stevenson described its tumbledown appearance. Under changing names and editors, the local newspaper decried the sluggish economy and the town’s anemic board of trustees.

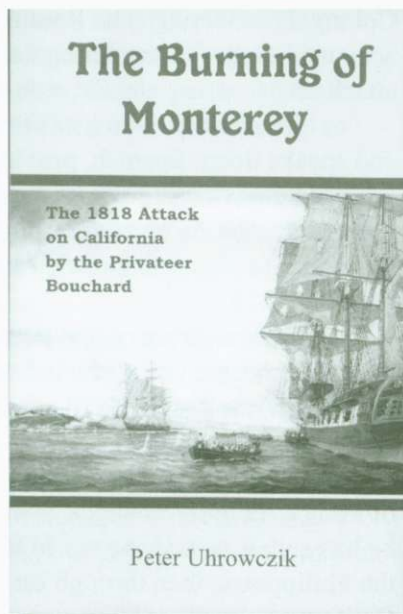
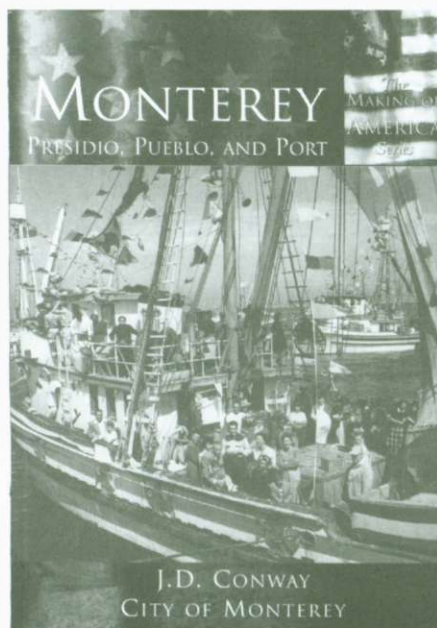
There is a historical explanation for the condition. Monterey’s local government was disincorporated in 1857 by Delos Ashley in the state legislature as a means of avoiding municipal property taxes on the thirty thousand acres that Ashley and David Jacks had stolen from the city. Jacks’ stranglehold on public life persisted until 1889, when a burghers’ revolt restored city government and began to provide municipal services for the first time. The successful (re)incorporation struggle was a great moment of popular celebration in Monterey. Street demonstrations rejoiced that “Jacks’ boot” was finally off their collective necks. Monterey was not so much disregarded as it was made a land baron’s fiefdom and politically maintained in that state until emerging (class) interests overthrew the old order. The interesting story concerns why Monterey’s growth was arrested for so long and how that eventually changed, rather than some revisionist claim that the period of stasis never happened.

There are other minor problems. Some dates are incorrect: Viceregal rule in New Spain began in 1535, not 1635 (p. 25); California’s

Constitutional Convention took place in 1849, not 1850 (p. 65). The misspelling of key names (Mission San Carlos Borromeo instead of Borromeo, for example) may be the product of typographical error. More substantively, rather than saying “labor strife marred the waterfront during the turbulent 1930s” (p. 125), one might conclude from the evidence that union mobilization markedly improved the standard of living for men and women working on the waterfront from the 1920s to the 1940s. Perhaps the author would agree.

The book does serve a good purpose. Students new to the subject will find it a useful introduction, informative and well-illustrated. Local readers will enjoy the nostalgia, an attraction of history-writing not to be ignored.

*A paperback edition of John Walton's **Storied Land: Community and Memory in Monterey** (2001) was published by the University of California Press in 2003.*





## BOOK REVIEW

**Peter Uhrowczik. *The Burning of Monterey:  
The 1818 Attack on California by the Privateer Bouchard*  
Los Gatos, CA: Cyril Books, 2001, 170 pages.**

*Reviewed by Xavier K. Maruyama  
Professor of Physics at the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey*

Was Hipolito Bouchard, who attacked and burned Monterey in 1818, a pirate, a privateer, or a revolutionary hero? There is a striking contrast between the status of Bouchard as viewed in Argentina and in California. A plaza in Buenos Aires features a monument honoring him as a brave and noble patriot while in Monterey many regard him as a base pirate. The distinction between a pirate and a privateer is a fine one: the latter designation is acquired by possession of a letter of marque authorizing its holder to attack his nation's enemies and allowing him, under certain circumstances, to keep the proceeds.

Based on extensive research in Argentine as well as California archives, Peter Uhrowczik has compiled the first book-length treatment of Bouchard in English. Divided into four sections (California as a Colony, Privateering, The Raid on California, Return and Exile), his account supplies the wider context essential to understanding the unique attack on Monterey and the man who perpetrated it.

The author, who lived for an extended period in Argentina and speaks fluent Spanish, provides full translations of the sometimes contradictory descriptions of the attack by the principals, Bouchard and Governor Solá. As an added bonus, the fine maps and illustrations enable the reader to visualize Bouchard's itinerary and California geography as it was in 1818.

In November of that year, Monterey, capital of Alta California--then a remote province of what was still the Spanish viceroyalty of New Spain--fell into the hands of anti-Spanish rebels from Buenos Aires, capital of the newly independent Provincias Unidas del Río de Plata (today's Argentina). Their commander was Hipolito Bouchard, a native of France. In order to attack Spanish interests and to seize Spanish ships, he had sailed around the world from South America via Madagascar to the Philippines, then through the Sandwich Islands (now Hawaii) to Alta California.

Beginning his voyage from Buenos Aires in command of the frigate *La Argentina*, he acquired the corvette *Santa Rosa* in Hawaii. The *Santa Rosa* had sailed from Buenos Aires two months before Bouchard on a similar privateering mission, entering the Pacific directly. But off the coast of Chile her crew had mutinied, set their officers ashore, sailed to Hawaii, sold the ship to King Kamehameha I, and dispersed.

To acquire this ship, Bouchard paid the king and some of the mutineers; then he executed one of the leaders and flogged as many of the others as he could catch. He hired an Englishman, Peter Corney, as captain of the *Santa Rosa*, and as crew whatever ragtag collection of Europeans and Polynesians he could find.

Bouchard then sailed his enlarged flotilla toward the California coast. Having obtained supplies from the friendly Russians at Bodega Bay, he proceeded to capture, pillage and set fire to the capital, preserving only the Royal Presidio Chapel (today's San Carlos Cathedral) and the Mission at Carmel.

After raiding Rancho del Refugio, Santa Barbara and San Juan Capistrano, all with little profit to the privateers, Bouchard finally seized some Spanish ships off Mexico. Before long, however, he found himself imprisoned for piracy at Valparaiso, Chile. Having lost his political support in Argentina, he ended his days in Peru.

The business of privateering was not for the faint of heart. Bouchard fought off his own drunken sailors, aided the British by detaining four slave-trading ships at Madagascar, saw forty of his crew die of scurvy and many others stricken, fought pirates himself off Borneo, and failed in his attempts to seize a rich Spanish ship in Philippine waters.

As a consequence of Bouchard's raid, the English-speaking population of Alta California grew from three to five persons after one of Bouchard's officers was taken prisoner at Monterey and a Scottish drummer deserted at San Juan Capistrano.

Uhrowczik's perspective shows us much in a new light. For instance, American privateering flourished during the War of 1812, and the conclusion of that war in 1815 made many ships and crews available to the Spanish-American revolutionary insurgents. Uhrowczik's *Burning of Monterey* deepens our understanding of the story of a controversial figure by scrutinizing the records of the time and by reexamining Bouchard from the conflicting perspectives of those who admired and those who detested him.

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