

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

August 24, 1964

### **Silver Search**

Jose Joaquin de Arrillaga, born in Spain, was a captain and then lieutenant governor of the Californias at Loreto from 1736-92, governor of Monterey in 1793-94, governor of Alta California in 1804.

He came to Monterey in 1806 and lived here until 1814, dying in Soledad at the age of 64 years.

Arrillaga was honest and efficient, of most excellent private character and a model governor so far as the performance of routine duties were concerned, according to historical records in Bancroft's list of California pioneers.

In 1802, while Gov. Arrillaga was still in Monterey, he received the following communication on Feb. 2 from Raimundo Carrillo:

"After the year in which the deceased Mr. Diego de Borica went away, Ignacio Ortega was going about looking for lime (stone) to use in his work and found a vein of silver-lead ore near the small mountain that may be seen opposite the King's rancho to the northeast. After putting some of it in the fire, where it melted into a leaden mass, I gave it to his excellency the governor, who said 'Set about making an assay.'

"The time passed, because there had been no person who knew how, until the bark arrived, when the person (who came in her) after having inspected the ore made an experienced assay in a badly-made crucible resulting in 6 ounces of very fine silver which I myself weighed.

"It is now proposed to make a larger assay in a more practical and careful manner for which purpose there has come from Santa Barbara the retired Sergeant Jose Maria Ortega. By the next mail I will give your excellency individually the results.

"The miner assures me that if the furnace had not broken during the first assay the small quantity of ore would have yielded, as he knows from its richness, two marks (16 ounces) of silver. I send advice to the foregoing that your excellency may be properly informed. May our Savior protect you. Monterey February 2, 1802. Raimundo Carrillo." (Copied from the scrapbook of E.L. Williams.)

Raimundo Carrillo was born in 1769, in Loreto. He came as a soldier to California and rose to captain, dying in 1809, according to Bancroft's History of California.

He may be regarded as the founder of the Carrillo family, which must be considered in several respects the leading one in California by reason of number and prominence of its members and of their connection by marriage with so many of the best families, both native and pioneer.

The captain's wife was Tomasa Igmasa Luge; his sons and some of his grandsons are named by Bancroft. His only daughter, Maria Antonia, married Capt. Jose de la Guerra y Noriega of Santa Barbara.

Ignacio Ortega, a relative of Jose Maria Ortega, is credited with the discovery in 1812 of a silver mine near Salinas and from about 1810 to 1830 was the owner of the S. Isidro Rancho in the San Jose region.

Bancroft writes of this Ortega: "The decade had its mining excitement, as we have seen in the local annals of Monterey, but it was a rather mild one.

"Ignacio Ortega found a vein of ore in the foothills of Monterey, now Salinas Valley, which being assayed, quickly yielded richly in lead and silver. The mine was worked by Ortega subsequently at several different times, but with results not known."