

Researching the Indian population of Mexican-era San Diego, 1820-1846

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Abstract

During archaeological research at Old Town San Diego State Historic Park led by David (“Larry”) Felton, it was striking to note the number of artifacts that would normally have been associated with an Indian site. These included large quantities of brownware pottery as well as chipped and ground stone implements. There were also a small number of glass trade beads and projectile points made of glass. The historical record provided us with a *padrón* dated April 1836 that listed the Indian servants for a number of Mexican households in the pueblo of San Diego. There was also some interesting information from testimonials about the 1837 Indian uprising in San Diego. Realizing that the types of Indian artifacts found represented mainly utilitarian objects often associated with food preparation and cooking, we found corroboration of both the Indian presence as well as their status in the society. The fact that several cooks for the families were known to have been Indian men demonstrated the shift in traditional roles that had probably begun during life in the missions. In researching the names listed on the *padrón*, it was interesting to note that several of the individuals were gentile, or non-Christian, Indians and some coming from such places in Baja California as San Miguel, Rosario and Santa Catalina as well as having parents from the Rio Colorado, Cuyamaca and San Luis Rey. It is hoped that this study will broaden our image of the inhabitants of the pueblo of San Diego in the 1820s-1840s.

Pueblo of San Diego

The pueblo of San Diego thus had its beginnings as the location of the habitations of a number of presidial soldiers and their families who moved down from the presidio and set up housekeeping on the bench of land below the presidio. We may note that the date of 1821 for the first construction of houses in Old Town was about the same time as the date of Mexico's independence from Spain. Since many of the individuals who were moving into the pueblo were retired soldiers from the presidio, it may have been that the change of government encouraged retirement of a number of individuals from active service. It appears that the pueblo grew organically (much as did Monterey), and despite efforts to suggest that it followed a legally mandated pattern set by the Spanish monarchy (Padilla-Corona 1997), it is more likely that any resemblance to a rigorous layout based on the plaza was a later development.

The pueblo of San Diego did not formally come into being until January 1, 1835. The first *alcalde* was Juan María Osuna. Its formal status as a pueblo did not last for long because in 1836 there was a directive from Mexico that decreed a centralization of the departments of the Mexican Republic. In 1839, Osuna was again appointed to the office of *juez de paz*.

It is interesting to note that the wives in two neighboring families on the northeast side of Block 408 were sisters from the López family (Figure 1). They were daughters of Francisco

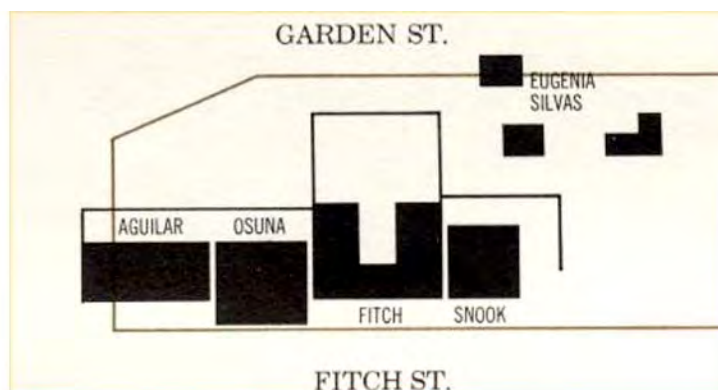


Figure 1. Residents of Block 408, Old Town San Diego.

Table 1. Individuals chosen in the 1826 San Diego election (with number of votes in parentheses).

José Antonio Carrillo (42)	Domingo Carrillo (37)	Santiago Argüello (26)
Agustín Zamorano (41)	Romualdo Pacheco (37)	Pedro Lobo (23)
Juan Bandini (41)	Juan José Rocha (37)	Francisco Basualdo (19)
José Antonio Estudillo (38)	Juan María Ybarra (35)	Antonio Solorzano (16)

Table 2. San Diego petitioners in the 1841 *expediente*.

Andrés Pico	José Aguilar	José A. Estudillo	José López
Joaquín de los Ríos y Ruiz	José Ybarra	José Alipas *	Carlos Silvas
Manuel Machado	Ramón Silvas	Manuel Verdugo	Jesús Moreno
Ricardo Peña	Juan María Marrón 1st	Tomás Gutiérrez	Juan Machado
Mariano Elizalde	Francisco Silvas *	Blas Aguilar	

(* Individuals listed in 1835 as members of the permanent cavalry company of San Diego.)

López and María Feliciano Arballo. Juan María Osuna was married to María Juliana Josefa López, and Joaquín Víctor Carrillo's wife was María Ignacia de la Candelaria López. The Carrillo family had occupied what later became known as the Fitch house.

Inhabitants of old San Diego

On November 19, 1826 elections were held in San Diego. The official in charge was the *jefe político*, José María Echeandía, the governor of the Californias. The meeting was held “*en la plaza vecindino inmediato al presidio*,” indicating that the presidial plaza was the gathering place and not the later plaza in the pueblo (Hayes n.d.:3). The 12 people elected are shown in Table 1.

A partial list of the male inhabitants of San Diego is found in an *expediente* filed in request of lands in the ex-Mission of San Juan Capistrano (Spanish Land Grants n.d., unclassified *expediente* no. 111). The request was dated April 10, 1841. Table 2 contains a list of the petitioners. (It should be noted that the document indicates that the list does not include all inhabitants.)

In order to get a better sense of the people inhabiting Old Town, especially the families, it was found useful to examine the records of the births at Mission San Diego for the years 1821-1852 (Davidson 1935-37; Griffin 1994; census records for San Diego). A list of names of

families and their children who may have lived in San Diego between 1821 and 1850 compiled by the author includes 27 women, 26 men and 124 children. This list is not complete, because some children may have been baptized in other missions but moved to San Diego to live. Also, there were some single men and women who lived in the area but had no children (e.g., Francisco Ruiz, Apolinaria Lorenzana, etc.). Still, it does give some idea of the demographics of the pueblo of San Diego during this time.

This list includes some intriguingly well-known individuals, including Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo and his girlfriend, Juana López. Juana López's parents, Juan López and María Eduviguez Arce, resided in the pueblo of San Diego, where they had a large family. In fact, they produced their final child only the year before the birth of Prudenciana, the "natural child" of Vallejo and Juana López, who was baptized on September 21, 1832 (Griffin 1994:Bapts. 2908 and 2915; Long 1983). Vallejo had evidently been playing the field, because he had been simultaneously involved with his future bride, Francisca María Felipa Venicia (Benicia) Carrillo, for a couple of years. Benicia was four years younger than her cousin, Juana López. In the remembrances of Mariano Vallejo's son, Platon (Vallejo 1994:18), Vallejo had sent his request for permission to marry by a burro-borne messenger.

Can you guess how long this round journey lasted? Nearly two years and a half! Imagine the emotions of the ardent young couple as they thought of the burro whose leaden feet delayed their happiness. "My father, man-fashioned, raged like a wild animal in a cage.... Several times during this long engagement, my father managed to visit San Diego." But even then their happiness was incomplete. According to the Spanish etiquette, a young couple, even if espoused, never meet except in the presence of a vigilant *dueña*. So they can only show their good temper for each other with their eyes.

In the end, Vallejo married Señorita Carrillo in great haste, stating that he needed to return north on military business (Vallejo 1994:17-19). In fact, he was at the time the *comandante* of the Presidio de San Francisco, and so a prolonged stay in San Diego may have become a problem. As it was, the marriage was performed during Lent on March 6, 1832, which required a special dispensation. The publishing of the banns of marriage was also forgone. This may have obviated any opportunity for Juana López to come forth to challenge the proceedings, as she was about three months pregnant at the time of the nuptials. Perhaps in naming her daughter Prudenciana, Juana López hoped to guide her own life away from becoming prey to fickle young men.

Agustín Zamorano, Lieutenant-Colonel of Engineers, was another on-again, off-again inhabitant of the pueblo of San Diego who was an important personage in other parts of California. He died in San Diego in 1842. It is interesting that he was born in St. Augustine, Florida (founded in 1565) (Schuetz-Miller 1994:103-104). Zamorano was a loyal lieutenant to Governor Echeandía during the insurrections that rocked Monterey in 1829 (note that his son, Luis Agustín Marcelino, was born that year in San Diego). Zamorano's marriage to the distinguished San Diego family of Santiago Argüello certainly placed him in the forefront of pueblo society (Harding 1934:37-39).

The large size of many California families was frequently commented on by various visitors. It is thus important to consider the large number of children present and their probable influence on the material culture deposits found in the archaeological excavations at the McCoy House site.

Indians in the pueblo of San Diego

A number of the families had Indian servants. This was probably even truer following the secularization of the missions in 1834-35. Whereas some of the former neophytes were sent to develop pueblos, such as at San Pascual (Farris 1997:119), others sought employment with the various families resident in the pueblo or on ranchos. It is interesting that some of the Indians from San Diego and San Luis Rey were desperate enough by 1839 to travel north to Santa Barbara. William Hartnell (Gurcke and Farris 2004:60-61), the *visitador general* of the California missions in 1839-1840, was sought out by 24 Indians from the ex-missions of San Diego and San Luis Rey who begged not to be forcefully returned to their missions due to the terrible economic conditions prevailing there at the time. The fact that they were willing to flee so far for survival suggests that former mission Indians were not simply permitted to blend back into the non-Christian population, but were being required to remain at the missions to work for the priests or *mayordomos*.

Therefore, it seems probable that Indians who had established a relationship with families of the *gente de razón* were willing to remain with them either through a sense of duty to “their families” or as a simple way to survive in a difficult environment. The *padrón* of 1836 further indicates that a number of the Indians were gentiles and not neophytes. This was indeed a “time of little choice” to borrow from Randy Milliken’s book on the Indians of northern California (Milliken 1995). The duties of these Indian servants at the pueblo were essentially those of household servants. In some cases the family cook would be an Indian male. Although this may seem strange, it was quite common in the missions of California. Following the secularization of the missions, men trained to cook for the priests would very likely have sought employment with Mexican families. Other Indian servants helped in various ways around the house as maids, food preparers, child care helpers, and gardeners. The availability of this servant class provided an elevated lifestyle for the Californio families. It is almost certain that most if not all of the mundane household activities (cooking, cleaning, collecting firewood, slaughtering animals, grinding corn and grains for food, etc.) would have been relegated to the Indian servants.

The fact of there being a sizable number of Indian servants in the pueblo of San Diego is made particularly clear in a census or *padrón* of the pueblo of San Diego dated April 17, 1836 (Hayes n.d.:item 296). At least 26 servants and their families are listed for 13 individual household heads (Table 3). In most cases, it is the woman of the house who is identified in this list.

Servants at San Diego further identified in the mission records

Juan Melsisi and Vicenta

In the household of Regidor Juan María Marrón was Alcalde 20 Juan who was said to be married to Vicenta. The San Diego Mission records inform us that Juan’s full name was Juan Melsisi (SD bapt. 1686) who was baptized at Mission San Diego on November 24, 1806. His parents were Santiago Melsisi (SD bapt. 1145), baptized on July 25, 1785 at the age of 14. Juan’s mother was María Guadalupe (SD bapt. 619), baptized on July 28, 1778 at the age of 4. She was from the village of San Francisco del Rincón.

Juan Melsisi married Vicenta on February 4, 1829 (SD marr. 1686). Vicenta’s parents were from San Miguel in Baja California. Her father was Pablo Cruz and her mother was named

Table 3. Indian servants in the 1836 “Padron de todas las familias de los indigenes que se hallan en el p.to de San Diego que sirviendo a sus amos.”

Casados (married)	
Sirviente de Señora Rafaela [Maria Rafaela Antonia Serrano, 1788-1846]	Alcalde José Luis
Sirviente del 1o Regidor Cdo Juan Ma Marron [wife Felipa Osuna de Marrón]	Idem Alcalde 20 Juan, casado con Vicenta y su nieto chico, Ygnacio [see below]
Sirviente de Señora Feliciano [Feliciano Valdez-Reyes]	Guillermo, casado con Victoria - Tiene hijos, Sirvestre Candelaria y Ortiz
Sirviente de Don Santiago [Santiago Argüello and his wife was María del Pilar Salvadora Ortega]	Juan Pedro, casado con M.a y tiene dos hijos, Maria Luisa y Augustin
Sirviente de Señora Rafaela, su hijo Tomas de Mariano	Mariano, casado con Clara - tiene dos hijos Tomas y José Antonio
Ydem con Señora Rafaela [Serrano]	Teperchaé, casado con M.a Antonia, y una nieta chica M.a Eusebia
Sirvientes de D.a M.a Osuna [probably Maria Felipa de Jesus Caterina Osuna]	Petra, Diana; Ollegó, casado con Rafaela, ejercicio pescador
Sirviente de Señora Luz Ruiz [María de la Luz Ruiz, wife of Juan María Marrón, the elder]	Ignacio, casado con Pilar - tiene una hija viuda llamada Isabel y una restituta viuda
[No master or mistress is shown for this person]	Pelegrino Camacho, casado con M.a Concepcion, ocupado de porse en su huerta.
Sirviente de Don Andrés Pico [unmarried]	Anastasio, Gentil, casado con M.a Luisa y un hijo de pecho
Sirviente de Don José Ant.o Estudillo*	José Maria, casado con Bonifacia, y hijo chico
Solteros (single people)	
Sirviente de Doña Magdalena [Estudillo?]	Geronima
Sirviente de Señora Feliciano [Valdez-Reyes]	Guadalupe, Lucas, José y Antonio
Sirviente de Señora Raimunda [Maria Raimunda Yorba [married to Juan Bautista Alvarado, 12 September 1809, Mission SD]	José Antonio
Sirviente de Don Juan Bandini [wife was Maria de los Dolores Verdugo]	Juan Miguel, casado con Juana y otro Miguel, soltero
Sirviente de Señora [Maria] Tomasa Pico [wife of Francisco Maria Dolores Canuto Alvarado, married at SD 24 May, 1829]	Tomas, gentil, casado con Maria y seis hijos chicos
Sirvientes de Señora Luis [sic] Ruiz [Maria de la Luz Ruiz]	Juan Pedro, mudo [mute]; y Tomas, soltero
do de Capitan Fitch [and his wife, Josefa Carrillo]	Pedro y José Maria, Gentiles
do de Señora Rafaela [Serrano]	Chrisanto
do de [Josef] Manuel Machado [his wife was Maria Serafina Valdez]	José Maria, casado con Basilia, y Ylario, soltero, gentiles
do de Don Santiago [Argüello]	Loreto

* In late 1829, Alfred Robinson (1846:65) stayed with José Antonio Estudillo, his wife, Maria Victoria Dominguez and her mother, Maria de los Reyes Ibañez during his stay in San Diego. He mentioned that at the time the family had three servants. These may well have been the servants listed here: José Maria, his wife, Bonifacia and their young son.

Tomasa (but she was dead at the time of Vicenta's marriage). Juan and Vicenta had a child named Ygnacio, baptized on March 28, 1833 (SD Bapt. 6539) and another child, María Guadalupe, baptized on March 13, 1831 (SD bapt. 6417). The *padrón* of 1836 shows three-year-old Ygnacio, but not María Guadalupe, who should have been five at this time.

Juan Bautista Tapilchay and María Antonia

The servants of Rafaela Serrano, "Teperchae and María Antonia, with grandchild María Eusebia," appear in the mission records as Juan Bautista Tapilchay and María Antonia. Juan Bautista Tapilchay was baptized September 17, 1825 (SD bapt. 5939) as an adult from Otay (Santo Domingo). His wife, María Antonia, was baptized the same day (SD bapt. 5941) from Jacucul (aka La Punta), also an adult. They had a daughter named Felipa, baptized on June 14, 1802 at age of 3 years (SD bapt. 2898). Felipa had married José Yuma. María Eusebia, who was mentioned in the list of servants as granddaughter to Tapilchay and María Antonia, was baptized on April 16, 1827 at the San Diego Presidio, age one day (SD bapt. 6108). Unfortunately, the mission records did not show the death date for either of María Eusebia's parents, but the fact that she was living with her grandparents at age nine suggests that they may have been dead by then. María Eusebia also appears on the confirmation register (S.D. Conf. 1545) as "*hija de José Yuma y de Felipa.*" Her *madrina* was María Ortega.

Mariano Mesallau and María Clara

Listed as servants of Señora Rafaela and her son, Tomás de Mariano, were "*Mariano, casado con Clara -- tiene dos hijos, Tomás y José Antonio.*" Mariano Messalau, baptized on July 8, 1817 at age 27 (SD bapt. 4468), was from Tepuguac (or Jepuquach), aka La Punta alias San Domingo. On July 9, 1817, he married María Clara (SD marr. 1222).

María Clara was baptized on May 26, 1817 at age 22 (SD bapt. 4459). Her native name was Yigsai. She was from Majanal (also associated with La Punta/Santo Domingo).

They had at least four children: Tomás á Cora (SD bapt. 4544), February 18, 1818; María Tomasa á Cora (SD bapt. 4545), his twin who apparently died very young; José Antonio, baptized on May 5, 1828 (SD bapt. 6181) and Mariano, baptized on March 28, 1830 (SD bapt. 6333). As indicated above, only two of the four children are mentioned in the *padrón* of 1836, Tomás (then 18 years old) and José Antonio (then eight years old). The fourth child, Mariano, appears in the San Diego death records on April 1, 1830, so he evidently died young (S.D. death 4063). At the time of his death, Mariano was said to be a "*párvulo de la casa,*" which indicated the family was then living at the mission of San Diego. It is worth mentioning that on May 8, 1836 (three weeks after the census was taken) Tomás á Cora married María de San Juan, who was listed as having parents from the Río Colorado area. The possibility that Tomás á Cora may have been adopted by Sra. Rafaela is intriguing, but not proven.

Ygnacio and María del Pilar

Señora María de la Luz Ruiz is shown as having two servants, Ignacio and his wife Pilar. They had a widowed daughter named Isabel. Her parents were Ygnacio and his wife María del Pilar, both of whom were from Mission San Luis Rey. Although the baptismal records for San Luis Rey have been lost, much of the information has been recreated by John Johnson et al.

(1998) from the mission *padrones*. John Johnson (personal communication 2004) provided information on the three individuals. Ignacio Pallejos was baptized on April 6, 1805 at age 16 (SLR bapt. 773). He was originally from Caguenga (Qewee'nga), north of present-day Lake Henshaw, in a place known as La Puerta de San José. "Pallejos" may be a variant of the Luiseño clan name that is also spelled "Paleguix," to which the chief belonged who signed the Treaty of Temecula in 1852 on behalf of "La Puerta" (Johnson, personal communication 2004).

María del Pilar Molix was from San Alejo (now called "San Elijo"), a Diegueño rancheria on the coast. She was baptized as SLR baptism 780 along with a group of young adults from Luiseño and Ipai rancherias that included her future husband, Ignacio Pallejas. Her age at the time of baptism was 18.

Their daughter, María Isabel, was baptized soon after birth on November 18, 1821 (SLR bapt. 2874). In the San Diego mission registers we find that María Isabel was married at age 13 to Josef María Gandiga (gentile from Rosario in Baja California) on February 13, 1835 (SD marr. 1885). Since she is described as a widow in the 1836 *padrón*, her husband presumably died in the intervening year before the census was taken.

Pelegrino (or Peregrino) Camacho and María Concepción

Peregrino Camacho appears as a separate entry without any master or mistress shown. He is shown as married to María Concepción. He may well have lived in María de la Luz Ruiz's garden, but not as a servant. There is a marriage record for Peregrino and María Nichinchil dated December 7, 1835 (SD Marr. 1903). There is also a record for a child of Peregrino Camacho and María de la Concepción named Clemente, born on November 23, 1835. Peregrino was shown on both the marriage and child's baptism records as having come from Santa Catalina. This is presumably Mission Santa Catalina in Baja California. In the marriage record, Peregrino is noted as being the widower of Mauricia. However, since Mauricia did not appear in the Huntington Library database on southern California mission records, it seems likely that this occurred in Baja California. From the information in the *padron* of April 1836, it would appear that María de la Concepción and Mauricia may have been living apart from Peregrino at this time. María de la Concepción's baptism number at Mission San Diego is probably SD 6704 (Anne Reid, personal communication 2005).

The house and garden of María de la Luz Ruiz was described by William Smythe (1908:132) as being "across the river, opposite the Presidio." This sounds suspiciously like the location identification for the Grijalva rancho.

Indian uprising of 1837

In the spring of 1837, there was a great deal of political turmoil in California between southern California loyalists like Agustín Zamorano and Juan Bandini who were faithful to the central government in Mexico against the insurgent group, mainly in the north, led by Juan Bautista Alvarado. As a means to weaken the southern group, it appears that the northern faction incited the Indians of the San Diego District (Figure 2) to rise up and attack various ranchos in the area. Since the military command was in disarray in the area, it was left up to Zamorano and a number of other individuals from San Diego (Santiago Argüello, Juan Bandini, Nicanor Estrada, Aniceto María Xavaleta and Santiago E. Argüello, in an overall force of 39 men) to attempt to pacify Indians in the countryside. On May 15, 1837, these men were camped at



Figure 2. Map of the Distrito de San Diego by Narváez in 1830.

Campo de la Palma where they interrogated some captured Indians and learned the disturbing news that they were being instigated by northern faction forces (Harding 1934). In a letter dated June 5, 1837, Zamorano reported to the Secretary of War and Marine in Mexico,

The rebels from Monterey ... aroused the neighboring pagan Indians sending them against this town [San Diego]. It was not many days before we suffered the effects of a project as horrible as it was fantastic. At the beginning of last month, some pagan rancherías, together with a few converted neophytes who lived among us as domestics, plotted an uprising against this presidio and the ranches within its jurisdiction. They planned to strike the fatal blow at all places on the same day.

However, one group attacking rancho Jamul got ahead of the plan and upon capturing and interrogating some Indian prisoners, the fuller plot became known.

From the testimony taken from the lookouts of the enemy, who were captured, and the statement made by one of the Indian servants, who was invited to attend the questioning, their criminal plan was luckily discovered. We captured five of those implicated and executed them at once; one of them leaving the statement they had been aroused by the rebels in the north. The day before, another Indian, being drunk, dared to cry publicly, “Long live California the Free!” which is the cry by which the northern revolutionists distinguish themselves. When he was sought for arrest, he had fled among the pagans [Zamorano, quoted in Harding 1934:224-226].

Some interesting insight into life in the pueblo is given in the memoirs of several old residents, including José María Estudillo (1878), Felipa Osuna de Marrón (1878), Juana Machado de Wrightington (1878) and William Heath Davis (1967). All four related a story of the above-mentioned plot by a group of Indian domestic servants in San Diego. The plotters were to rob the Fitch store, kill the individual managing it for Fitch (Lawrence Hatwell [sic]¹), and kidnap Sra. Fitch (María Antonia Carrillo de Fitch) and Sra. Marrón (Felipa Osuna de Marrón). The plot was foiled by Felipa Osuna, thanks to her knowledge of the Indian language, and the servants involved were pursued and executed by Sergeant Macedonio González. One of these alleged plotters was a servant in the Estudillo home, named Juan Antonio. He was the cook and much beloved of the young José María Estudillo who remembered the soldiers under Alférez Macedonio González coming to the house and finding Juan Antonio hiding under his bed. The Indian servant, Juan Antonio, was then dragged away to be executed by shooting, along with others identified as being involved in the plot. The child followed the execution party to a place 1,000 yards south of town where the later Protestant cemetery was located and was much grieved at the death. He remembered it as having occurred in either 1835 or 1836 (Estudillo 1878:8 ff.). However, this event must have occurred in May 1837, based on a note in the diary of Faxon Dean Atherton (1964:50) dated June 1, 1837, in which he stated that

Capt. Fitch went on shore for home, having learnt that two of his Indian servants had been shot for being concerned in a conspiracy to murder his wife and family,

¹ Lorenzo Nelson Hartwell was an American sailor who arrived in San Diego in 1834 aboard the *Catalina*. He was evidently working for Henry Fitch in 1837. On April 22, 1839, he petitioned for the land at Santa Ysabel and stated on his petition that he was “a North American, and a resident in San Diego ... married with a Mexican woman” (Bancroft 1886(3):778; Spanish Archives n.d., Unclass. Exped. 46, T7:301).

also all the inhabitants of San Diego. His servants got into a dispute about what they should do with Mrs. Fitch. One was for killing her, the other wished to take her with him to the Tulares and in their dispute they were overheard by a little Indian boy who gave Mrs. F. the information and they were immediately apprehended and before being shot, confessed the whole. There were three other accomplices shot with them.

The plot thus co-occurred with the period of general Indian attacks that wracked San Diego County in 1837, notably the attack on the Jamul rancho in April 1837. Juana Machado de Wrightington (1878:17) remembered more details of the Indians involved. She identified the individuals as “Nario, Christian from Baja California; José María, also from Baja; Carrancio, from the Cuyamaca mountains and married in San Diego; Juan Antonio, from here in San Diego; Pedro Pablo, this latter was also from the same mountains.”

A motive for the involvement of Juan Antonio was given by Apolinaria Lorenzana in her memoirs. She said that a brother of Juan Antonio was a man named Ianajachil who was a non-Christian Indian and one of her servants who worked on her Rancho Santa Clara de Jamachá. Ianajachil had been killed somewhat earlier by Macedonio González on suspicion that he had been involved in an attack on the Jamul Rancho; however, Lorenzana declared that she strongly doubted his involvement in the attack (Lorenzana 1990:24).

In addition to the five individuals executed, another one, Juan, servant to Felipa Osuna de Marrón, was said to have left that morning to collect wood and never returned (Pourade 1963:33). He would presumably have been the individual listed in the 1836 *padrón* as being the “second *alcalde*” at that time. He may also have been the person referred to by Zamorano, above, as having raised the northern war-cry and then having “fled among the pagans.” The young José María Estudillo mentioned the arrest of two Indians from the household of Henry Fitch, one from the house of Juan Bandini, as well as Juan Antonio, the cook who had worked for his family. He also noted that a servant of the house of Juan María Marrón had left to cut wood earlier that morning (Estudillo 1878).

Juana Machado also noted that the information on the plot was revealed by a servant of Sra. Fitch (Doña Josefa Carrillo) named Candelaria. Josefa Carrillo was the godmother (*madrina*) of Candelaria. Unfortunately, my attempt to identify this Candelaria in the mission records held at the Huntington Library proved unsuccessful.

In a story told by William Heath Davis, he stated,

One of the daughters of the Alvarado family married Captain Snook. After her marriage two of her younger sisters resided with her a portion of the time. One of them had acquired considerable knowledge of Indian speech. Several of these families had Indian men for cooks. One evening after supper, the young lady just mentioned, Doña Guadalupe Alvarado, overheard the cooks in earnest conversation in the Indian language. As soon as the words were caught by her ear she was startled and surprised, and drawing nearer hear all that was said. She discovered that the Indian cooks from the different families had gathered in the kitchen of the house and were discussing a plan of attack upon the town by members of their tribe. It appeared that arrangements had been completed for the capture of the town the following night, and that the cooks in the several families were to lend their aid.

In the council of the cooks it came out that each on the following night was to communicate with a spy from the main body of Indians, and to take station

for this purpose on top of the hill overlooking the town, where the old presidio and first garrison quarters of the Spaniards in California formerly stood. They were to inform the spy of the condition of each family, whether or not it was sufficiently off guard at the time to warrant an attack. There happened to be present in the house Don Pío Pico and Don Andrés Pico, who were making a friendly call on the family. They were a good deal startled at the statement made by the young lady and represented that they would give the conspiracy immediate attention. The people of San Diego at that period had their houses well supplied with arms and were always on the watch for Indian movements. Accordingly, during the night they organized a company of citizens and arranged that at daylight each house should be visited and the cook secured. This was successfully accomplished. As each of the conspirators came out of the house in the early morning he was lassoed, and all were taken a little distance from town, where it was proposed to shoot them. They expressed a desire to be allowed to die as Christians, to confess to the priest and to receive the Sacrament. This request was granted; the priest heard the confession of each and administered the rites of the Church. A trench of suitable depth was then dug and the Indians made to kneel close beside it. Then, on being shot, each fell into the ditch, where he was buried. Eight or ten Indians were executed at this time.

While these proceedings were taking place a messenger was sent to one of the Boston hide ships lying in the port requesting that a cannon might be loaned to the town to assist in its defense. The cannon was sent over, with a suitable supply of ammunition. At night a party of citizens visited the spot where the Indian spy was to appear and succeeded in capturing him. He steadily refused to confess, though assured that he would soon die as his friends had done before him. One of his ears was cut off, and he was given to understand that the other one would follow, and that he would be mutilated little by little until the statement required of him; whereupon his resolution gave way and he made a confession indicating where the Indians were encamped and telling all that he knew.

This mode of extorting a confession, although repulsive to those who participated in it, was the only way of securing the desired information. After the spy had divulged all he knew, he was shot without ceremony, he being an unconverted Indian and not desiring the services of the priest.

The next day the citizens were out in force, found and surprised the Indians and engaged them in battle; numbers of them were killed, but none of the Californians [Davis 1967:129-130].

Davis adds an additional story to the discovery of the plot. However, his identification of Doña Guadalupe Alvarado, a younger sister of the wife of Captain Snook, as the one who uncovered the plot while living with her sister and brother-in-law does not fully ring true because the Snooks were not even married until December 2, 1837, five months after the reputed occurrence of the plot. It would seem that Davis got Guadalupe Alvarado mixed up with the story told by Felipa Osuna de Marrón. There has been the suggestion that the various stories or “testimonials” surrounding the attack on the Jamul Rancho and the subsequent plot in San Diego follow a certain set pattern for such stories in which roles are set out. Rosaura Sánchez (1995:143-156) analyzed the various stories relating to the attack as follows:

At an ideological level the Jamul narrative has to be viewed as a romantic

enplotment of historical antagonisms and as a reconstruction that attempts to legitimate other constructions in the testimonials dealing with social relations, social practices, and political policies in California history between 1825 and 1846.

The story of this abortive plot is interesting in several respects. One is the confirmation of there having been Indian men often living in the households, which could help explain the number of Indian artifacts found around the location of the Silvas adobe. It is also of interest to realize that the Fitches and the Silvas lived in the same block. As related by Felipa Osuna de Marrón, part of the plot was to attack Sra. Fitch when she went out in the early hours of the morning to knead the bread dough for the morning bread in the kitchen/eating place (*comedor*); the Indians would slip into the doorway in the darkness and kill Hartwell, rob the store and make off with the women.

This description indicates that certain parts of the cooking process were retained by the matron of the household (Osuna de Marrón 1878:20-21). The *comedor* was often an open eating place on the back corridor of the household (Edna Kimbro, personal communication 1995). The interaction of the Indian men visiting back and forth between the various households would also seem conducive to sitting around casually working on making tools or playing games in the backyards. The account mentions that their weapons were to be “sharp pointed arrows” (*jaras*), indicating that even despite their level of acculturation, arrows, not guns were the weapons available. Thus, the discovery of a glass projectile point in the backyard of the Silvas adobe may be seen as not so surprising in this context.

Continued Indian presence in San Diego after statehood

An Indian presence in the vicinity of Old Town continued for many years, and it appears that it was not simply a haphazard set of shacks, but was organized sufficiently to have their own elected officials (*alcaldes*) in addition to a “*capitán*.” An article in 1873 mentioned the recent election of two *alcaldes* (Juan Carrillo and his brother Unsol) and the continued leadership of “El Capitan [who] is immovably fixed in the affection of his compatriots, and no election was needed in his case” (San Diego Weekly World 1873a). The rancheria was characterized in the article as being a half mile from the courthouse, and another article said it was near the “barracks.” This would presumably have been the American fort and barracks that replaced the presidio. In two articles, also published in 1873, we learn that “El Capitan” was addressed as Manuel, was said to have once been chief of the Cahuillas and had been elected to the post of *capitán* 19 years ago, “going on his twentieth year” (San Diego Weekly World 1873a, 1873b). Chief José Manuel Hatam is pictured in Richard Carrico’s book, *Strangers in a Stolen Land* (1987:49) and noted as the chief of the San Diego Indians around 1874.

Indians continued to live around San Diego and in Mission Valley until about 1910, when white and Asian populations began to take over all the land in the area and the Indians were expelled as being squatters. According to Florence Shipek (1991:9-10) most of the Indians had left the San Diego area by 1920 and most of them ended up in northern Baja California. This was where Dr. Shipek located her now-famous consultant, Delfina Cuero.

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