

Dr. K. H. H. []
9.7.9 Carr Harry
C 23 The West is Still Wild
New York, 1932.

8/22/38. H.
San Luis County

p. 150.

San Juan Bautista

The shy little postmistress at San Juan Bautista looked at me through a stamp window.

'You recognize the name' she said - please I had picked the name from a post-office bulletin.

'Yes' she said with shy pride, 'my people came with the Donner Party. My mother has told me about that terrible journey across the mountains. I have heard her tell how they starved up there up there in the snow.

She used to make soup from my father's boots. One by one they froze and died.

Yes it was horrible; but wasn't it worth while? They, they were some of the people who made California.

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9.7.9.
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The West is Still Wild
New York, 1932.

8/27/38. J.T.
San Benito County

pp. 184-87.

Mission San Juan Bautista

Of all the missions in California, the one closest to my heart, is San Juan Bautista, one hundred and twenty-five miles south of San Francisco.

The mission was founded June, 24, '797, the fifteenth established. It was dedicated to John the Baptist.

What we call missions are only the churches of the missions. The missions were, in fact, great establishments.

San Juan Bautista has best preserved this ancient glory; the old wine cellar, the apartments of the priests, the great kitchen with oven in which a steer could be roasted, the convent (where the mythical Romona is supposed to have received her education), the sacristy with the pool into which the holy water was poured was

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The Monk is still Wild
New York, 1932

8/22/38. V.T. (2)
San Benito County

pp 184, 87

Mission San Juan Bautista

paused back into the earth undefiled —
there is even a quaint little jail where
they locked up the Indians singers to be
sure they would be on hand and sober
for the next day's Mass.

Among the early fathers was Fray Estevan Tapis
who was a great musician. Had he lived in
our day, he would have been world famous.

The chants he composed and arranged
are a wonderment to modern musicians.
In order to be sure that the Indian altos did
not jump the track, and poach upon the
preserves of the basses, he painted their
notes in different colors. His music —
exquisitely illumined on parchment — is still
to seen in the Mission Museum. He is
buried under the altar of the church.

Another famous priest of that day was

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Carr Harvey
The West is still Wild
New York, 1932

8/22/38 V.P.
San Benito County (3)

pp 184-187

Mission San Juan Bautista

Fray de la Cuesta, the greatest linguist among the Padres. He spoke fluently fourteen Indian dialects. He left an interesting diary in which he recommended that anyone trying to learn a language should always take lessons from an old woman. An old woman is patient and is not trying to learn your language instead of teaching hers to you. Fray de la Cuesta is buried at Santa Fe.

During the time the missions were in ruins, most of Fray de la Cuesta's priceless dictionaries were stolen.

Last year the last of the San Juan Mission tribe died.

Some curious things are in the Mission Museum. To convert the heathen Father Papis naturally turned to music. Vancouver the English explorer

Darkhio

9.7.9

C 23

Carr Harvey

The Nest is Still Wild

New York, 1932

8/22/38. H. ④

San Juan County

pp 184-187

Mission San Juan Bautista

gave him a hand organ. with this he used to go into the hills and attract the heathen. Happily they were not aware that the best tune on the musical roll was, 'Go to the devil'.

Another relic is an ark out of which paps a stuffed white dove. The early priests had to visualize religion for the primitives. The dove was to give them the idea of the Holy Ghost. In the church itself, you can see on the mud-brick floor tracks of wolves and mountain lions, where the wild brasts stepped on the adobe before the sun had thoroughly dried it.

I don't know whether it was by accident or design, but the altar has one theatrical and striking characteristic.

The windows of the Choir-loft are so placed that at the crucial moment of the

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C 23

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The Nest is still wild

New York, 1932

8/22/38. V.T. (5)
San Benito County

pp. 184-187.

Mission San Juan Bautista.

Holy Mass, a sunbeam break through the window and shines on the golden monstrance. The town itself is a treasure; it has changed very little since the fifties, when it was an important stage-station and trading-post. The mission fronts on a plaza.

8/19/38. V.P.
San Juan Bautista

Duff Hill
979.4
D221
Vol. III

Barcroft Hubert Howe
History of California
San Francisco, 1886.

pp 449-458.

San Juan Bautista

In 1836 a strong popular feeling amounting to almost hatred against the "Mexicans" of the interior, and a belief that Mexico should furnish for California something more or less than rules, and laws made with no reference to the country's needs. . . . The Californians were far from entertaining so radical an idea as that of absolute independence, but they believed that territorial interests should be consulted by the nation, and that no more Mexican officers should be sent to rule California. Alvarado, Carrillo, Castro Pico Vallejo and other young Californians of the same class, the men who for most part supplied the diputacion with members, the politicians of the country.

Duff Hill
979.4
D221
Vol. III

8/19/38. V.P.
San Juan Bautista

Instr Lib

979.4
B221.
Vol. III.

Darwin H. H. H. H.
History of California
San Francisco, 1886.

8/19/38. V. 1. (2)
San Benito County

pp. 449. 58

San Juan Bautista

not only shared the popular sentiment, but were disposed to utilize it for their own as for their country's interest. They were willing to furnish from their own number men to rule California and handle its scanty revenues.

Some of them had become more than half convinced that Mexican ways of doing most things were not the best ways. . . . Hence the rising against Gutierrez, whose character and acts, . . . were unimportant factors in the problem.

Juan B. Alvarado, second viceroy and president of the disputation, was the leading spirit in this movement. . . . He was observant and quick to learn. He and his companions José Castro and

8/19/38. V.T. 3
San Diego County

Dark Lib
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979.4
B221
Vol. III

Daniel H. H. Hubert
History of California
San Francisco, 1886.

pp 449-58.

San Juan Bautista

Guadalupe Valleys, were fond of roading, especially when they could get contraband goods and elude the vigilance of the priors.

He learned much by his association with foreigners, besides acquiring a smattering of English. - - -

p. 453

At any rate Alvarado and Jose Castro left the Capital in October, and making San Juan their headquarters, began making active preparations for a rising of the Sutter, native and foreign. ⑩ - - -

⑩ In the Honolulu P. O. Gazette, Dec. 2, 1837, it is stated that Ramirez sent Alvarado to ask for a guard to prevent smuggling. Gutierrez assented but suggested that the guard be stationed on board the vessels, and not on shore. Alvarado replied that R. simply wanted a guard, and could station it to suit himself. The gov.

Derry Lib
979.4
B221
Vol. III

Danvers Hubert Howe
History of California
San Francisco, 1886.

8/9/38. D.P.
San Diego County

pp 449-451.

San Juan Bautista

Footnote ⁽¹⁰⁾ continued. —

was angry and threatened to arrest A, as a revolutionist, and A. thought it best to leave town the same night. Robinson, Life in Cal., '73-4, affirms that the quarrel was one of etiquette in the matter of placing guards. Tubbill, Diary, T. H. Howard, Milkes, and Farmhouse give the same version in substance, though the latter adds some fanciful embellishments, as is his custom when no absolute lies suggest themselves. Quio Hist. Cal., MS., 304-6 says that Fanning was negotiating future customs dues to raise money for gambling, balls, etc. Gutierrez interfered to prevent the

8/19/38 J.P.

San Luis County 5

Book Title
C
979.4
D221
Vol. III

Bancroft Hubert Howe
History of California
San Francisco, 1886.

pp 449-458.

San Juan Bautista

fastuole. cont from p. 4.

The abuse, Ramirez, became insolent and talked of revolt, Alvarado joined in the quarrel, and both were threatened with arrest. G. changed his mind and wished to conciliate A., but could not find him. Avila, Coras de Cal., M.S., 8-9 and Gomez, Lo que Sabe, M.S., 44-5 state that A. was believed by G. to have been the writer of a pasquinade against him posted at a street corner. Janssens, Vida, M.S., 71-2, says that the meeting had been held beforehand, at which the pretext for the quarrel had been devised.

p454.

From one of his stormy interviews with Gutierrez, Alvarado returned to the hall to find it empty, the diputacion having adjourned in its flight to meet at San Juan, whither the president hastened to

8/19/38. J.L.
San Benito County (6)

Berk file
C
979.4
D 221
Vol. III

Darwin Hubert Howe
History of California
San Francisco, 1886

pp 449-58.

Benjamin Bautista

to join his fellow-votals. ^{ms} A meeting held
" There is a little mystery about this diputacion. A
new election was to have been held on Nov. 6th, but
now the body must have constituted as in the
sessions following the May election, recorded
in the last chapter. That is, 1. Castro, 2. Alvarado,
3. Guerra, 4. R. Gomez, 5. Spence, 6. Crespo,
7. J. Gomez. Alvarado represents Crespo as
having been a spy of the gov., excluded when
a secret session was held; and Spence is said
to have met with the body though not a member,
while nothing is said of the two Gomez. Puelva,
who took a prominent part, may have been
a suplente called upon to act in the absence
of one of these. There is no record what ever of
the October sessions Estevan de la Torre,

8/19/38. F.L.
San Diego Calif

Dark Side
©
979.4
B221
Vol. III

Dancroft Hubert Howe
History of California
San Francisco, 1886

pp 449-458 San Juan Bautista

Justate cont of from p 6. -

Reminis., M.S., 62.4 says that one day Gutierrez entered the hall of the dip. where drunk and had hot words with Alvarado, whom he ordered under arrest after suspending the session.

J. M. de la Torre, narrator's father, furnished Charms and accompanied Alvarado to San Juan that night. J. J. Vallejo, Reminis., M.S., 122.3 has yet another version. He says that Gutierrez sent out spies to mingle with the people and learn who were prominent in fomenting discontent. Learning that Alvarado and Castro were the leaders, he ordered the arrest and exile of the former, who, being warned was aided by Lic Boronda and Isaac Graham to escape.

Dark
C
979.4
D 221
Vol. III

8/19/38. JTB
San Francisco

Danforth Hubert Howe
History of California
San Francisco, 1886.

pp 449-458

San Juan Bautista

at once, at which Estivan Meruías and other prominent citizens took part. Vocal Antonio Buena made a radical speech against Gutierrez as a centralist who disregarded the rights of the people, as represented by the diputacion, a body he had repeatedly insulted and even threatened to dissolve by force. He argued that Gutierrez had no right to hold both commands, and advocated a resort to force to rid the country of its oppressor. Spence and Meruías, mindful of their commercial interests, opposed the use of force, but favored a petition to the supreme government, leaving matters in statu quo for the present. This policy was not acceptable to the majority

8/19/38. Ft.
San Francisco

Darby Hill
979.4
B221
Vol. III

Danforth Hubert Howe
History of California
San Francisco, 1886

pp 449-58.

San James Bautista

who, on motion of Castro, voted that if Gutierrez would not give up the civil command he must be killed.

This was signed by Castro, Duena, Alvarado, and Guerra. Spence refused, but promised to aid the cause. Alvarado was appointed to solicit the cooperation of Talley at Sonoma, and Castro was ordered to take command of the citizens in arms. Meanwhile the governor learned what course affairs were taking, and sent Crespo to San James to negotiate, offering to make some concessions; but the agent was not received, and the answer sent back was to the effect that the deputacion, representing the people, had undertaken the preservation of federal institutions, and the governor must prepare to defend himself. . . .
At San James Alvarado found many citizens

8/19/38 V.T.
San Benito County

Duff Lib
979.4
E221
Vol. III

Dunsmuir Hubert Howe
History of California
San Francisco, 1886.

pp 449-58.

San Juan Bautista

ready to aid in the cause and eager for active operations. . . .
Castro at San Juan and among the rancheros of the Salinas and Tájaro valleys had also been successful in organizing a little revolutionary army; and about seventy-five mounted Californians, armed with lances and such old muskets - for the most part unfit for use - as could be found on the ranches and assembled apparently at Jesus Valles' rancho on the Tájaro.
They had a Mexican flag and plenty of fife and drums obtained at the Mission of San Juan. There are no narratives which throw any light on the details of these preparations.
The strongest part of the revolutionary force,

Deer's file
C
979.4
B221
Vol. III

8/19/38. FT.
San Benito County

Danforth Hubert How
History of California
San Francisco, 1886.

pp 449. 58.

San Juan Bautista

From a military point of view, was Graham's company of riflemen. Graham was a Texan hunter who had come from New Mexico three years before. He was a wild reckless fellow, a crack-shot, a despiser of all Mexican "varmint" who had opened a distillery not far from San Juan. His place was a favorite loafing place for foreigners. . . . It must be remembered, however, that there was a foreign influence in the whole affair quite distinct from that exerted by the members of Graham's company.