Basque Capital and the Settlement of the Southwestern United States

By
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Introduction

The role of the Basques in the exploration and settlement of the Americas is receiving new attention from historians and scholars. Research in the last forty years has correctly re-identified many of the individuals who came to the New World from Spain during the Age of Exploration as Basques, rather than Spaniards. While it is true that the great majority of these Basques were from what is now the Spanish side of the Pyrenees Mountains, they were and are a physiologically and culturally different race than the other Iberians. These early Basques formed a close-knit minority of aggressive, successful seamen, explorers, missionaries, settlers, frontiersmen, businessmen and administrators whose numbers of accomplishments far outweighed the size of their population.

Beginning with Columbus' voyages, Basques were an important and necessary part of Spain's quest to colonize the New World. They built and manned many of the ships used between Spain and the Americas and led or participated in many of the expeditions of exploration, conquest and settlement throughout Nueva España. Basques were also heavily involved in the provisioning of the new settlements and in maintaining the commercial trade necessary to keep supply lines open and flourishing between Europe and North and South America.

While hard working, the great majority of these immigrant Basques were not wealthy. Indeed, most came to the New World searching for new opportunities. Some aggressively took advantage of the unique situations presented to them to greatly increase their financial worth. Basque historian Donald Garate states that, "… nearly everyone [Basques] who came to the New World improved their situation." They were able to better themselves because of, among other things, their strong work ethic, opportunistic

business and /or militaristic ventures, their close ethnic and family ties and, in some cases, extraordinary luck.

A few of these Basques used their new fortunes to promote their own personal interests (and the interests of the crown) through expeditions into unknown or little-known territories. These enterprising individuals made important discoveries, extended the Spanish frontier, opened new colonies and helped shape Southwestern history.

This paper will deal primarily with three Basque family groups: The Oñates, the Urdiñolas and the Anzas. It will relate how they attained their wealth and how they used their fortunes, their extended families and Basque support systems to help turn relatively unexplored areas of New Spain into productive provinces. In doing so it will demonstrate the hardly acknowledged yet extremely important contributions these and other early Basques had in the initial settlement and development of New Mexico, Arizona, Texas and California and, therefore, to the beginnings of United States history.

The Oñates and New Mexico

Cristóbal de Oñate y Narria, the paternal head of the Oñate family in North America, was born in Narria, a small village just outside the Basque hamlet of Oñate in 1504 or 1505. He must have been an able and fairly educated person because, at the age of twenty, he sailed to Mexico as assistant to Rodrigo de Albornoz, the recently appointed accountant of the royal treasury of New Spain.

Upon reaching North America, Cristóbal began years of dealings with characters of all types, some of them cutthroats and scoundrels. Oñate's persona was such that he seemed able to maintain amicable and honorable relationships with even the most disreputable individuals.

One of the dubious characters he was involved with was Gonzalo de Salazar, whom he had met on the trip over from Spain. When Salazar reached the New World he attempted to outwardly befriend Mexico's governor, Hernán Cortéz. Secretly, however, he was scheming to take over Cortéz's government. He was not successful. (Oñate would later marry Salazar's daughter.)

In 1528 the king of Spain created an *Audienca* to replace Cortéz. Beltran Nuño de Guzmán was appointed president of this *Audencia.* Among Guzman's advisors were

Salazar and his circle of influence, including Oñate. When Guzmán seized the land and possessions of the deposed Cortéz and his men, Oñate received some of this property as a gift. This relationship with Guzmán would initiate Oñate's fortunes.

At age twenty-four Oñate joined Guzmán and his army as they prepared for the conquest of Nueva Galacia. Mexican historian José López Portillo y Weber asserts that Oñate soon learned war tactics and became one of Guzmán's most trusted and energetic officers. However, Guzmán became known as "Bloody Guzmán" because of his blatant disregard of the rights of the indigenous peoples and the barbaric way he treated them. He was not alone. Many of his soldiers took part in this brutality. Even Cristóbal's brother, Juan, participated in the atrocities. (Juan died several years later in Peru, blind and a pauper. He had fled there, with Cristóbal's help, to escape trial and avoid punishment for his deeds with Guzmán.) Evidently, amid all the carnage, Cristóbal's conduct and demeanor towards the Indians remained honorable. He did, however, take part in some of the spoils. From this point on, Oñate's fortune would be made on the frontiers of Mexico.

Oñate's steady accumulation of wealth had begun when he received his first grant of *encomienda,* the prosperous town of Culhuacán, from Guzmán. *Encomienda* was a tribute system where conquered Indians were required to pay an annual tax to the crown as a symbol of vassalage. In return they received protection and religious instruction. The king assigned *encomiendas,* or Indian towns, to *conquistadores* in the New World as rewards for their victories. This meant that the colonist or conquistador was allowed to collect and use the Indians' taxes that would have normally gone to the royal treasury. These *encomiendas* were highly prized as they represented a steady source of income for the owner and they gave the holder status, marking him as a select member of colonial aristocracy. Later, Oñate received another town from Guzmán; Tacámbaro, in Michoacán. Over the next few years Oñate received more *encomiendas*, most of them located in Nueva Galicia. In addition, Oñate had income from the ownership of stock ranches, farms and a sugar refinery. He was getting wealthy but his fortunes were to grow even larger.

Because of his savagery on the frontier, Guzmán was removed in disgrace as the head of the *Audencia*. Oñate, who had been the lieutenant governor of Nueva Galicia at

the time, was made acting governor. (During the several periods he was acting governor, Oñate assigned a number of *encomiendas* to himself. This was very lucrative and not illegal.) He served as governor until 1539 at which time Francisco Vásquez de Coronado was appointed. Oñate remained in office, again, as lieutenant governor.

In 1540 viceroy Antonio de Mendoza chose Coronado to head an expedition north into *Tierra Nueva.* This was the first sanctioned expedition into what would become New Mexico. There were rumors of riches and cities made of gold that the king wished investigated. This excursion lasted two years and was fruitless as far as the discovery of mineral wealth was concerned. While Coronado was gone, Oñate was again acting governor.

When Coronado returned, viceroy Mendoza sent Oñate to Zacatecas to settle an Indian rebellion that became known as the Mixton War. Unknown to Oñate at the time, this directive to relocate to Zacatecas would be the start of his greatest financial windfall.

Following the successful completion of the war, Oñate took a serious interest in prospecting. He discovered valuable silver ore at two sites near Compostela and located others above Guadalajara. These discoveries turned his interests towards mining and gave him the necessary capital to proceed with prospecting on a larger scale.

In 1546 he formed an association with three other veterans of the Mixton War. They were Juan de Tolosa, Miguel de Ibarra and Miguel's nephew, Diego de Ibarra, all native Basques who were living in the town of Nochistlán, which was on the trail towards Zacatecas. (It was not difficult for Basques on the frontier and throughout the New World to find and associate with each other: Their unique language being the most common link.)

Tolosa was sent on several prospecting expeditions towards the northeast, all financially backed by Oñate and the Ibarras. Finally, in September of 1546 he struck it rich. With a small party of soldiers, Indian allies and a few Franciscan Friars, Tolosa camped at the base of a rock formation the Spaniards called *La Bufa*. Indians in the area were given small gifts and, in return, they gave the Spaniards rocks containing strands of pure silver. They even showed the Spaniards where to find more of these rocks close to their campsite. Tolosa collected several burro loads of the ore and returned to Nochistlán for assay. There, the silver's richness was confirmed.

Oñate and Diego Ibarra formed a partnership with Tolosa to open these new mines and to found a town near them. They added another partner, Baltasar Temiño de Bañuelos, and the group became known as the "Big Four," mining one of the largest silver deposits ever found in North America. However, Oñate was the main partner in the group and its chief investor as shown in records from the times that refer to the partnership as *"Cristóbal de Oñate y compania."* According to historian Alfredo Jiménez, the huge successes of Oñate and several of the Ibarras were unique exceptions to the failures and, in some cases, the violent deaths suffered by many *conquistadores.*

On January 20, 1548 the Big Four met at the base of *La Bufa* and founded the city of Zacatecas. It became a silver boomtown and by 1550 it was second in population only to Mexico City. It grew to contain foundries, smelters and fifty reduction works. Oñate owned thirteen stamp mills and smelters and he built a large two-story house with a private chapel about five miles north of Zacatecas at the mining camp of Pánuco. There he lived like a benevolent feudal lord, helping the desperate and grubstaking more ventures. He began turning the taxes from his *encomiendas* back to the Indians for them to use to develop their own communities. In addition, he maintained a home in Mexico City and divided his time between the two estates as his business required. With a profit of over one and a half million pesos from his mines, Oñate's fortune was cast in silver.

In late 1549 or early 1550, when Cristóbal was about forty-five, he married Doña Catalina de Salazar y de la Cadena. Doña Catalina was, herself, a person of some circumstance being the daughter of retired treasury officer Gonzalo de Salazar. She was probably in her early thirties and had been previously married to Ruy Díaz de Mendoza. They had a daughter and two sons. Some historians relate that Doña Catalina abandoned Diaz and took her young children and returned to Mexico to be with her parents, thus becoming a bigamist when she married Oñate. Historian Donald Garate, however, has shown through his research that Díaz had died while en route to the New World with Doña Catalina and their children and that it was after this that his widow legally married Don Cristóbal in Mexico City.

After the marriage, seven children were born to Cristóbal and Catalina. First was Fernando, then Juan, Cristóbal, Luís, Alonso, Ana and María. Juan would be the son who would take the Oñate name into New Mexico. Recent research suggests that he and

Cristóbal were probably twins born in 1552 at the family home in Pánuco. Pánuco was considered a suburb of Zacatecas and contained its own plaza, church and the grand homes of the Oñates and Ibarras. Juan and his brothers and sisters spent their early years there involved in all the activities dealing with silver and it's processing. Indeed, silver was responsible for all they had and all they did.

As was the necessary custom of almost every male Spaniard on the frontier, Juan de Oñate y Salazar took up arms against warring Indians at an early age and, sometime in his early twenties, he began financing these Indian campaigns with his own money. This was also a custom for male aristocracy on the frontier. As he roamed the countryside on patrol, he was constantly prospecting for silver as well. He made new discoveries and developed his own mines, adding to his fortunes. All the while he was also tending to the mining and smelting interests of the family's silver at Pánuco. His brothers seem to have let him assume the management of that part of the Oñate businesses.

On October 6, 1567, Don Cristóbal Oñate died. The title to his mines went to Juan's mother, Doña Catalina and, when she died a few years later, to Juan. By Juan's thirtieth birthday he had become a very wealthy man in his own right. He had inherited wealth and he had accumulated additional riches on his own. He could have retired to a sedentary life of ease. However, he chose to try and acquire additional fame and fortune. It is not difficult to conclude that Don Juan's excursion into New Mexico, twenty-five years later, would be an attempt to gain this additional prominence and that it would be financed mainly by the Oñate's Zacatecas silver fortune.

In the meantime, sometime in the late 1580's, Juan de Oñate married the daughter of Juan de Tolosa, his father's former business partner. Her name was Isabel de Tolosa Cortéz Moctezuma. She was the granddaughter of the conqueror of Mexico, Hernán Cortéz, and his native mistress Isabel Moctezuma, daughter of the Aztec emperor.

Besides Isabel, the wife of Don Juan, the Tolosas had two other children. One was their only son, Juan, who became a priest and vicar of Zacatecas in 1595. The other was Leonor, named for her mother, who would marry Basque, Cristóbal de Zaldívar. The Oñates and Zaldívars became so intermeshed by marriage that it is difficult to untangle the branches in their family trees.

Ruy Díaz de Zaldívar, also probably from the town of Oñate, married Cristóbal de Oñate's sister, María. They had two sons. One was Juan de Zaldívar Oñate who went to Nueva Galicia and fought Indians with his uncle Cristóbal and Nuño de Guzmán and then went with Coronado searching for the Seven Cities of Gold. His younger brother, Vicente, came to Zacatecas and prospered in mining and also gained the rank of lieutenant captain-general.

Vicente married Magdalena de Mendoza y Salazar, whose mother had married Cristóbal de Oñate, father of Juan. So Vicente de Zaldívar's wife, Magdalena, was his uncle Juan's stepsister. Vicente was Juan's nephew and also his second cousin. The intertwining branches do not end there. Vicente and Magdalena had three sons. They were nephews to Don Juan de Oñate and also his cousins. One of them, Cristóbal, also became Don Juan's sister-in-law's husband.

Don Juan and Isabel had two children: A son, Cristóbal de Naharriondo Pérez Oñate y Cortéz Moctezuma and a daughter, María de Oñate y Cortéz Moctezuma. With the addition of his son, Juan de Oñate had a brother, several cousins and nephews, a father and a great-grandfather all named Cristóbal. This complicated web of interrelated families and alliances created an extensive extended family. Families such as these were not unknown on the early frontier and they guaranteed a cohesive unit of both financial and physical resources when needed. Don Juan would call upon his brothers and the three Zaldívar's for a great deal of help in the New Mexico expedition to come.

Previous to Don Juan's pilgrimage north into New Mexico, few ventures had been made in that direction. Coronado's sanctioned expedition has been mentioned. Two illegal entries occurred in the early 1590's. Gaspar Castaño de Sosa, the lieutenant governor of Nuevo León, led one. He took 170 men, women and children into New Mexico in 1590 for the purpose of settlement. In 1591 the viceroy of Mexico sent fifty soldiers to arrest Castaño and they escorted the entire group from the area. In 1593, Captain Francisco Leyva de Bonilla was leading a small group of soldiers chasing Indians along the northern border of Nueva Vizcaya. He took the opportunity to "invade" New Mexico. Bonilla's group was beset with problems and he was killed by one of his own men, Gutiérrez de Humaña.

These early explorers were mainly seeking mineral wealth. However, the primary goal of the government of Spain in colonizing New Mexico differed from the objectives of Coronado, Sosa and Bonilla. The first instruction given to Juan de Oñate by the crown was to initiate the conversion of the "…many large settlements of heathen Indians who live in ignorance of God and our holy Catholic faith…so that they might have an orderly and decent Christian life." The religious aspect of the expedition cannot be overstated. Fray Alonso de Benavides implied in 1630 that the original founding expedition was mainly a convenience for the missionaries and that Oñate and the colonists were simply along as extras.

A secondary goal of the expedition was to locate and claim the elusive (and non-existent) sea channel the Spaniards called the Strait of Anián. The English and other northern Europeans called this mythical waterway the Northwest Passage. In 1595, Basque Sebastian Vizcaíno had been sent to sail and explore the coast of California with locating the Strait of Anián as one of his goals. Vizcaíno and Oñate were both part of the crown's same plan to extend and strengthen the northern frontier of Mexico

Oñate, who was actually viceroy Velasco's second choice to lead the expedition, petitioned for and received the mandate to settle New Mexico in 1595. However, it did not come without much bureaucratic bungling, a change in viceroys, envy, the extended time it took for communication to and from Spain plus intrigue and deceit from a jealous contemporary.

That contemporary was a Spaniard named Juan Bautista Lomas y Colmenares. He had originally petitioned viceroy Villamanrique for the right to settle New Mexico. The king of Spain turned down his petition because his demands were far too high. A new viceroy, Luís de Velasco, then chose Basque Francisco de Urdiñola to settle the area. A resentful Lomas brought false charges against Urdiñola eliminating Urdiñola's chance at colonization. As a result, the viceroy then chose Oñate for the task. Again, a frustrated and angry Lomas was responsible for long delays and other problems suffered, this time by Oñate. (Lomas will be covered in more detail in the discussion of the settlement of Texas.)

As it was, it took two and one-half years before the huge entourage started moving. During that time there were challenges to Oñate's leadership, another viceroy

change, spiteful governmental inspections, multiple bureaucratic delays and tangles of red tape. While dealing with politics and the politicians, Oñate also had to feed and supply the people he had recruited to make the trip and help maintain their interest so they would not abandon it. It was his responsibility as well to provide for the care and feeding of the thousands of head of livestock that had been gathered. In addition, on the last formal governmental inspection, Oñate was deemed shy of the agreed upon numbers of personnel, provisions and equipment. In a move of family solidarity, the Zaldívars came to his aid and gave bond to cover the shortages and the last obstacle was cleared.

Don Juan's brothers, Luís, Fernando, Cristóbal and Alonso were made official agents and remained behind to use Oñate's power of attorney to send supplies, raise money and represent him at the viceregal court. Cristóbal de Zaldívar, Oñate's nephew, also stayed behind to provision the trip. Cristóbal's brothers accompanied Oñate. Juan de Zaldívar was made second in command with the rank of *maese de campo* or field marshal. Younger brother Vincente was made *sargento mayor* or lieutenant marshal. Also along on the expedition, and listed as a sergeant with "complete armor for himself and horse" was Oñate y Salazar's nine year old son, Cristóbal.

Finally, the enormous undertaking got underway. On January 26, 1598 the huge expedition headed north out of San Gerónimo. Many books have been written describing the expedition and this paper will not attempt to recreate the journey. Suffice it to say that on July 11, 1598 after a journey of almost six months and 800 miles, Oñate and his weary group reached a pueblo they called San Juan in the future state of New Mexico.

During the next fifteen years Oñate would withstand the killing of his nephew Juan and other personal disasters, desertions, Indian attacks, bad weather and varieties of different setbacks that would have crushed many lesser men. However, as the province's first governor (there would be nine additional Basque governors of Spanish New Mexico including Juan's brother, Cristóbal) he had extended the royal highway by more than six hundred miles from Santa Bárbara, Sonora, to San Juan, New Mexico and established the *parajes* or official campgrounds that were used along the route for the next three hundred years. He explored into Arizona and down to the mouth of the Colorado River on the Gulf of California. He rode the plains of Kansas, Oklahoma and part of Texas. He founded the first church in New Mexico as well as the livestock industry in the

Southwest. He was the state's first miner and ore processor and in 1608 he could well have helped found Santa Fe. The settlers he brought along with him ten years earlier would become the base of the Spanish population in the new province.

The Oñate era in New Mexico set the pattern for further settlement of the area. A man of considerable fortune and family backing, Don Juan de Oñate y Salazar used his Basque family's wealth, position and solidarity to establish a new province within the Spanish empire, an area we now know as the state of New Mexico.

The Urdiñolas and Texas

Very little is documented regarding Francisco de Urdiñola y Larrumbide. It is known that he was born in Oiartzun, in the Basque province of Guipuzkoa and came to the New World sometime after 1572. As other Basques had done, he first went to the frontier of New Spain looking for adventure and fortune. Much like his contemporary, Juan de Oñate y Salazar, he became an Indian fighter, a miner, cattle rancher, agriculturalist, politician and colonizer.

It appears he had an insatiable appetite for land and in eastern Nueva Vizcaya he established six enormous *estancias* covering several million acres. From 1583 to 1589 he acquired even more property and had control of large parts of the provinces of Coahuila and Nuevo Leon. He was said to have been the largest landholder in the world.

By 1591 he was lieutenant governor of Nueva Vizcaya and was its governor from 1603 to 1613. In that capacity, he was regarded as one of Mexico's most talented and energetic frontier leaders. Urdiñola founded or co-founded, with Basque Cristóbal de Segastiberri, the towns of San Esteban de Nueva Tlaxcala, Saltillo, Concepción del Oro, Parras and Patos. He also founded the first commercial winery in the New World. Throughout his lifetime he continued to acquire land, farms, livestock, mines and estates.

In addition to these facts regarding Urdiñola, erroneous information regarding him and his father circulated in Mexico for generations. Historian Vito Alessio Robles notes that a fictitious Francisco de Urdiñola almost took the place of the real man. The first myth was that of "Francisco de Urdiñola el Viejo," the elder, wherein he was supposed to be the father of "Francisco de Urdiñola el Muzo," the younger. According to tradition, Francisco el Viejo fought Indians, discovered mines and founded settlements

north of Zacatecas. With the fortune accumulated by his father, Francisco el Muzo was then able to reach great prominence as a conquistador and frontier settler. Modern historians had accepted this story of the two Urdiñolas until Robles showed, with extensive research, that Francisco de Urdiñola's father, Juanes, never left the Basque Country to come to the Americas. There was only one Francisco de Urdiñola.

In 1589 Juan Bautista de Lomas y Colmenares (This is the same Lomas y Colmenares who tried to sabotage Juan de Oñate) signed a contract for the settlement of New Mexico with viceroy of Mexico, Marqués de Villamanrique. The Marqués' secretary was Lomas' son-in-law. Lomas was a wealthy miner and master of Nieves, north of Zacatecas. Lomas' demands for the settlement of the new territory included demanding a wealthy miner and master of Nieves, north of Zacatecas, the title and privileges of adelantado for his family in perpetuity; the office and authority of governor and captain general for six heirs in succession; the rank of count or marques; forty thousand vassals in perpetuity and a private reserve of twenty-four square leagues, or 120,000 acres. These conditions of colonization were so outrageous that king Philip II would not grant Lomas the contract.

Lomas, like Oñate and Urdiñola, was extremely wealthy. He also had the aid of tainted political and judicial insiders. However, unlike the two Basques, historian H. H. Bancroft relates that Lomas did not wish to risk his own personal fortune or reputation in the venture and wanted the crown to assume all responsibilities. Lomas' demands, in essence, would insure that he and his family would not be risking their own fortunes or their social standings if something went wrong in the settlement or colonization processes.

After Lomas was denied his petition, the new viceroy of Mexico, Luís de Velasco, entered into a contract with Urdiñola for the settlement of New Mexico. Lomas was, again, furious. With criminal cunning and false charges he was able to get the *Audencia* of Guadalajara to charge Urdiñola with the poisoning and murder of his wife. Lomas was aided in this plot by a relative who was a judge in the *Audencia*. Urdiñola was arrested, his property confiscated and his contract to colonize New Mexico was cancelled. Spanish legal proceedings moved slowly in those times and it was not until six years later that Urdiñola was acquitted. Historian Robles proves the charges were false and

manufactured by Lomas. Urdiñola was found innocent, in part because of his mother-in-law, who testified that her daughter had died of a fever and not by poison. By then however, Juan de Oñate had already gone to New Mexico.

Don Francisco Urdiñola regained his property and continued profiting on the frontier. He was married to Leonor Lopez Nieves and they had two daughters, Mary and Isabel. Both married Basques. Isabel married *oidor* Pedro Suarez de Longoria and Mary wed Don Luís de Alceaga Ibarguen. Mary and Don Luís had a son and a daughter. The son died young and the daughter, Mary, wed General Luís Valdes who was governor of Nueva Vizcaya from 1642-1649. They had a daughter, Francisca de Valdes Alceaga Urdiñola.

As an adult, Francisca was widowed once and her second marriage was to Don Augustine de Echéverz y Subiza. Don Augustine had been given the title of Marquis de San Miguel de Aguayo by king Charles II for his exploits fighting Indians on the frontiers of New Spain. They had a daughter, Ignacia Xaviera Echéverz y Valdes.

Ignacia was Don Francisco Urdiñola's great-great-granddaughter and she would become the primary heir to the Urdiñola family fortune. She was born at Patos but she and her parents relocated to Spain when she was young. On April 26, 1704 in Pamplona, Ignacia married her third husband, Don Joseph Azlor Virto y Vera, Field Marshal of the Spanish Armies. At the time she was one of New Spain's wealthiest widows. Don Joseph, through his mother-in-law, inherited the title of the Second Marquis de San Miguel de Aguayo. In 1711 Don Joseph, Ignacia and Doña Francisca returned to the Urdiñola *estancia* at Patos. The estate included almost half the province of Coahuila.

From 1718 to 1720 England and France allied against Spain in what was called the War of the Quadruple Alliance. During this war they attempted to capture Spanish interests in North America. Three decades earlier, between 1680 and 1682 Basque padre Francisco Ayeta founded three missions near present day El Paso, Texas. One, *San Antonia de Senecu*, was the focal point of the village of Ysleta; the oldest European settlement in what is now Texas. However, flooding of the Rio Grande River soon destroyed these three missions. Therefore, in 1719 Spain only had only two remaining outposts in Texas: A small mission, *San Miguel de Linares de los Adeas* in East Texas that had be taken over by the French and a primitive settlement at San Antonio. In June

of that year a few Frenchmen from Natchitoches, Louisiana, took control of mission San Miguel. The Spaniards at the mission had no idea there was a war going on and the French explained that their reinforcements would be arriving shortly. The Spanish colonists, missionaries and soldiers left the area peacefully and retreated to San Antonio.

In the same year, Don Joseph Azlor Virto y Vera was named governor of Coahuila and Texas. He informed the viceroy of Mexico that he would mount an expedition into Texas, at his own expense, to retake the area for Spain. The Viceroy accepted the offer. Using his wife's Urdiñola family fortune, Don Joseph raised an army of 500 mounted soldiers. His departure was delayed by a year, however, because of Indian problems in Coahuila and a disastrous drought that killed over 80% of the horses he had purchased for the expedition. Heavy rains ended the drought but made travel impossible until late 1720.

As Don Joseph departed northward, his orders were to take back East Texas without force and to keep out of Louisiana. He left Coahuila with 500 soldiers, several friars, over 2,800 horses, 6,400 sheep and hundreds of goats. This was the largest and most imposing force Spain had ever sent into Texas. The expedition crossed the Rio Grande on March 20, 1721 and reached San Antonio on April 4. The main force of the expedition went on to East Texas. Traveling by way of the present day sites of New Braunfels and San Marcos they crossed the Colorado River just south of the present day city of Austin. The group then forded Little River at the Griffin Crossing and the Brazos near present day Waco. They then followed the Old San Antonio Road to the area between the Trinity and the Red River where the French occupied the mission of *San Miguel de Linares de los Adeas*, in an area now located in present day Louisiana.

Louis Juchereau de St. Denis, the commander of the French forces at mission San Miguel, welcomed the Spanish. Even though St. Denis had planned on attacking San Antonio, he was not in a warring mood and, realizing he was greatly out numbered, agreed to withdraw to Natchitoches. Don Joseph had retaken East Texas for Spain without firing a shot.

While still in the area, Don Joseph established five new missions*: San Francisco de los Tejas* (renamed *San Francisco de los Neches*), *San José de los Nazonis, Nuestra Señora de las Purísma Concepción de los Hainai, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los*

Nacogdoches, Nuestra Señora de los Dolores de los Ais, and he reestablished *San Miguel de Linares de los Adaes*. In addition, he also rebuilt the presidio of *Nuestra Señora de los Dolores de los Tejas* and established the presidio of *Nuestra Señora del Pilar de los Adaes* for the protection of the area. He provided the soldiers for this presidio and it would become the first capital of Texas. (Texas would have ten Basque governors between 1703 and 1835.)

In late 1721 those members of the expedition not assigned to East Texas returned to San Antonio. There, Don Joseph bolstered the pueblo by building a third mission, *San Francisco Xavier de Náxara* and by rebuilding *San Antonio de Béxar Presidio*. (In 1733 Basque Captain José de Urrutia would become commander of the Royal Presidio at San Antonio de Béxar, further solidifying and strengthening Spanish Texas.) At La Bahía, Don Joseph also established the presidio of *Nuestra Señora de Loreto* and the mission *Nuestra Señora del Espíritu Santo de Zúñiga*. He also recommended steps to settle 400 families between San Antonio and the East Texas missions and he initiated a direct sea route from La Bahía to Veracruz as a supply route for the Texas settlements.

Don Joseph left 219 of his men at the various missions and presidios in Texas and returned to Coahuila in May of 1722. At the beginning of the expedition, Spanish Texas consisted of San Antonio and about 50 soldiers. This peaceful expedition resulted in the increased number of missions in Texas from two to ten; the number of presidios from one to four and the military force was increased from 50 to 270 soldiers. The expedition reestablished Spain's claim to Texas and opened the area to further colonization. (Sixty-four years later, in 1786, Basque Juan de Ugalde was named commander of arms of the Provincias Internas with authority over Coahuila, Nuevo León, Nuevo Santander and Texas. In 1787 he was made commanding general of the same area and in 1789 he launched a major campaign against the Apache in West Texas. In 1790 he defeated a group of more than 300 Lipan, Lipiyan and Mescalero Apache at Arroyo de la Soledad, the present day Sabinal River canyon. In commemoration of this victory the battlefield was named Cañon de Ugalde and the city and county of Uvalde**,** Texas take their names from commander Ugalde. Later, in 1829, Basque Lorenzo de Zavala was granted a contract to further colonize Texas.)

Francisco Urdiñola died in 1618. Almost exactly one hundred years later, his enormous wealth, passed down to his great-great-granddaughter Ignacia, would make the colonization of Texas possible. Thanks to Don Francisco, Don Joseph and generations of a Basque family's fortune, Texas was no longer just an area on a map of New Spain; it was now an actual piece of the Spanish Empire that would eventually become the largest state in the contiguous United States.

The Anzas and California and Arizona

The story of the Anza family and the colonization of the Monterey-San Francisco area of California is a story of individual strength and a complex web of influential Basque political and financial power. The saga begins in Hernani, Gipuzkoa, where Juan Bautista de Anza was born in 1693. He left home for the New World in 1712 when he was only 19 years old. He was ultimately headed for Culiacán, located on the Gulf of California in the province of Sinaloa, where some of his mother's relatives, the Sasoetas, were already established.

Anza's early years in the New World are undocumented. However, in 1718 he was in the royal silver mining camp of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de Aguaje*, a primitive, wild and ruthless silver boomtown. Here he owned his first mine and a crudely built supply store. Besides Anza's mine, all the other mines in town were owned by two other Basques: Martin de Ibarburu and Francisco de Aldaniz.

Anza soon became involved in the mining at nearby *Nuestra Señora de Aránzazu de Tetuachi* and lived there from 1719 to 1721. During that period, associates of his continued working his mine at Aguaje. While in Tetuachi, Anza made many of his first important contacts in Sonora, including another Basque miner, José de Goicoechea. It was in this area, at Arizpe and in the Sonora River Valley, that Anza would lay the foundations for his future family. It was here, too, that he became involved in politics and the militia. In 1721, as lieutenant of Sonora, he led his first campaigns against the Apache.

Financially, as Anza became involved in the military, his soldier's pay was very meager. However, while he was posted and living at Janos, he still had mines operating at Aguaje and Tetuachi and he had purchased additional operating mines at Basochuca.

He continued to own supply stores at the mines and he was involved in farming and livestock raising as well. While he was not nearly as wealthy as the Oñates or Urdiñolas, he was still close to the top of the social and economic ladder on the northern frontier of Mexico. For the next 16 years Anza would be one of the most influential and respected men in Sonora. He was an accomplished problem solver, Indian fighter, administrator and a true hero of the times.

In 1724 his cousin, Pedro Felipe de Anza, came to Janos from the Basque Country. He soon began administrating and operating Juan Bautista's mines and other interests. Pedro would become an important element in the Anza family's sphere of influence.

In 1736, Anza was involved in an event that would forever shape US history and geography. At a site roughly seventeen miles south of present-day Nogales and what would become the US border, a large strike of unusually formed sliver slabs was discovered. Anza was now Chief Justice of Sonora and was sent by the viceroy of Mexico to establish ownership, division of assets and tax collections at the strike area.

The region was almost totally inhabited by Basque frontiersmen and ranchers. Close by was a tiny Basque settlement called *Aritz Ona*; Basque for "good oak." Anza set up his headquarters at Basque Bernardo de Urrea's ranch at *Aritz Ona* and began the task of settling the legal questions before him. The Spanish were compulsive record keepers and in each message Anza would send to Mexico City he would list his location as "*Aritz Ona*." Sonoran historian Donald Garate contends that William Claude Jones, the man who chose the name of the state of Arizona, would have never heard of the word had it not been for Juan Bautista de Anza. Historians are slow to accept new revelations but most now accept the Basque origin for the name of our forty-eighth state, thanks to the pioneering research of Donald Garate. (Important Basques involved in the early years of what is now the state of Arizona included the first commander of the Royal Fort of St. Ignatius at Tubac, just south of Tucson, Juan Tomás Beldarrain. In addition, several Basques were posted at Tucson. In 1791 José Ignacio Moraga was the commander of the presidio with fellow Basques Juan Felipe Beldarrain, José María Sosa, Francisco Usarraga, Mariano Urrea, José Romero de Urrea and Bernardo de Urrea also stationed there.)

In 1737, Anza petitioned viceroy and archbishop Juan Antonio de Vizarrón y Equiarreta, also a Basque, to open a land route from Sonora to Alta California. This had been discussed for over 200 years. The petition never came to Anza and he would not live to see the route initiated. On May 9, 1740 he was killed in an Apache ambush while returning home from a patrol. Anza was a pioneer of the northern Sonoran frontier and his legacy would continue through his son.

After Anza's death, his cousin Pedro moved to Pitic but continued to manage the mines and affairs of Don Juan for his widow and family. Pedro was also godfather of Juan Bautista de Anza II and, evidently, minded his godson well. In Pitic, Pedro became partners with governor Agustin de Vildósola, a wealthy and influential Basque friend of Don Juan's. Twenty years later, Pedro would also be in partnership with Taxco mine owner and richest man in Mexico, Basque José de Laborda. Pedro had his own mining interests in Zacatecas and Taxco as well and had developed an extremely strong financial and political position that would aid his godson, Juan Bautista de Anza II, when he set out to complete his father's dream to locate a route between Sonora and Alta California in 1774.

Juan Bautista de Anza II was born in July 1736 at either Fronteras or Cuquiarachi in Sonora, Mexico. He was almost four years old when his father was killed. He quickly followed in his father's footsteps by joining the Spanish militia when he was just 15 years old. By the time he was 23 he was captain of Tubac presidio, in what is now Arizona. He gained a reputation as a skillful and fearless Indian fighter in skirmishes against two of the most feared Indian groups in the southwest, the Apache and the Seri. In 1772 he petitioned viceroy Antonio Maria Bucareli y Ursua, also a Basque on his maternal side, to find a route from Sonora to Alta California.

Anza was not the only person Bucareli had to consider for this expedition. Three others were in contention. They were Commander Don Fernando de Rivera y Moncada, the military man who would be governor of Alta California from 1773 to 1777; Mateo Sastre, the governor of Sonora from 1771 to 1774 and Francisco Antonio Crespo, who would be the governor of Sonora from 1774 to 1777. These three and Anza all had the credentials and experience necessary to make the journey. However, as Arizona and

Sonoran historian Donald Garate has shown, even though Anza was not as well known politically as the others, he had one major advantage they did not have: He was Basque.

Historian Garate contends that Anza was chosen to find the route for several reasons. Among them were his family and ethnic heritage as a criollo of Basque descent, his kinship to his godfather and his family's connections to the powerful political, financial and trade network of Basques in and around Mexico City. In essence, Anza was able to make his two excursions into California because the aid he received was largely unavailable to non-Basques.

Other than viceroy Bucareli y Ursua, examples of the Anzas' Basques connections in the government included Francisco de Viana of the Royal Audencia of Mexico, Joseph Antonio de Areche of the Royal Audencia, Domingo de Arangoiti of the Audencia and Julian de Arriaga, Minister of the Indies, who's job it was to approve of and present Juan Bautista's plans to the king of Spain. The Council of War also had to approve of Anza's plans. At least half the members of the Council were Basque: Bucareli y Ursua, Areche, Juan Chrisostomo de Barroeta, Fernando Mangino and Antonio de Villaurrutia. Influential lawyers Francisco Xavier de Gamboa and Agustin Josef de Echeverria y Orcolaga were also in this network.

Some of the wealthiest merchants and financiers in Mexico, also Basques, supported this substructure. Those important to Anza included his friend and Sonoran merchant Francisco de Guizamotegui and Juan Bautista de Arosqueta in Mexico City. Arosqueta had combined his mining interests with his mercantile business to found one of the most powerful economic establishments in Nueva España. Arosqueta's daughter married Francisco de Fagoaga Iragorri. Fagoaga established the Royal Silver Bank of Mexico. Fagoaga's daughter married Manuel de Aldaco. Aldaco financed Pedro de Anza (Anza II's godfather) and José de Laborda in their huge silver strike at Taxco. One of the later administrators of the Royal Silver Bank of Mexico was Juan José de Echeveste. Garate reports that the Echevestes and Anzas were intermarried in Spain and that the Anzas, Aldacos and Fagoagas came from villages only a few miles apart in the Basque Country and that their families knew each other before anyone had left Spain for the New World. Anza's Basque connections were all in place to enable him to make the trek to California.

Previous to Anza's expedition, another Basque had led what was one of the first explorations of California. In 1602 Sebastian Vizcaino lead an exploration party from Acapulco, up the coast of California with three ships, two hundred men and three Carmelite Friars. He was searching for safe harbors for galleons returning to Mexico from the Philippines. On November 10 he reached San Miguel Bay, discovered and named in 1542 by Juan Cabrillo. Because his flagship was named San Diego and because the feast day for saint *San Diego de Alcala* was only two days off, Vizcaino renamed the harbor San Diego. As he continued his expedition up the coastline of California and among the additional sites he visited and named are San Clemente, Catalina, San Pedro, Santa Barbara, Point Conception, Monterey and Carmel.

At the time of Anza's expeditions there were probably less than 100 Europeans in all of Alta California and the Spanish settlements consisted only of two small military posts; *El Presidio Real de San Diego* and *El Presidio Real de San Carlos de Monterey*, plus five missions; *San Diego de Alcalá, San Carlos Borromeo de Carmelo*, *San Antonio de Padua, San Gabriel Arcángel* and *San Luis Obispo de Tolosa.* Basques were in charge of three of these missions: Gregorio Amurrio at San Diego, Fermín Francisco de Lasuén at San Gabriel and Juan Prestamero at San Luis Obispo. In addition, Basque priest José Antonio de Murguia was also at Carmel and Pablo de Mugartegui was at San Luis Obispo.

On his first exploratory trip, Anza left Tubac on January 9, 1774 with a small party of soldiers, mule packers, two friars, a few assorted tradesmen and Sebastian Tarabal, a Baja Indian who had just walked to Sonora from Mission San Gabriel. The group headed out across the desert to try and return to the mission. It was a difficult experience and in one instance the group wandered through, in and around sand dunes for almost a month. Eventually, the twenty-five or so remaining members of the party (Anza had sent several back towards Sonora after the time they spent in the dunes) arrived at Mission San Gabriel on March 22, seventy-four days after leaving Tubac. He then went north to visit the presidio of Monterey. Anza's return trip brought him back to Tubac on May 26, 1774. He had covered more than two thousand miles on the round trip.

He immediately began to make plans for a colonizing expedition and a return to Alta California. However, it took almost another year to complete the preparations

because frontier military inspector Antonio Bonilla had assigned Anza to Terrenate, much to Bucareli y Ursua's and Minister of the Indies Julian de Arriaga's dismay. Bucareli y Ursua had wanted to meet immediately with Anza after he had returned to Tubac and learn of his adventure first-hand. In late autumn, by the time Anza reached Mexico City to relate his travels, Bucareli y Ursua had already determined that Anza would be making the second trip into Alta California.

Governor Bucareli y Ursua requested that Anza and Juan José Echeveste, mentioned earlier as part of the Basque network in Mexico City, give him an estimate regarding the cost of a colonization trip to California. Echeveste developed the entire list of needed supplies "from shoes to hair ribbons." Anza then asked Bucarelli y Ursua to appoint veteran Basque soldier Miguel Gregorio de Echarri as his supply officer. The first officer and field soldier chosen by Anza's to accompany him on the expedition was José Joaquín Moraga. Moraga was Basque and Anza praised his "greater intelligence and his ability to write." When chosen by Anza, Moraga was a Lieutenant at Fronteras and had served in the army for eighteen years. The Apache had killed his father—a frontier soldier, as they had Anza's father.

Bucareli y Ursua authorized Anza to colonize the San Francisco Bay area by taking thirty-eight families, additional soldiers and livestock to the site. Anza actually left Tubac on October 23, 1775 with three hundred people, of which one hundred fifty-five were women and children. He also had over 1,000 head of livestock. There were no carts or wagons. The pack mules had to be loaded and unloaded each morning and night. Father Pedro Font and Father Francisco Garces also walked along. (Garces had made the first trip as well.) Font kept an extraordinary diary that has survived as one of the finest historical documents of its time.

The group avoided the mistakes made on the first expedition but still encountered various problems along the way, including a freak snowstorm that killed some of the livestock. When they reached San Gabriel mission on January 4, 1776 the party numbered two more than when it left Tubac. Three children had been born and one female died in childbirth. The trip had, again, taken seventy-four days.

On February 17, the expedition started north on the El Camino Real from San Gabriel towards Monterey. They arrived at Monterey on March 10. Anza left the

colonists there and took a small squad of seventeen soldiers, his Basque lieutenant José Joaquin Moraga, and Father Font to what is now the San Francisco Bay area. On March 28 they were the first Europeans to stand on the San Francisco side of what we now call the Golden Gate. They spent another month exploring the area and Anza designated the sites for both the future San Francisco presidio and Mission Delores. Anza can be declared the founder of San Francisco. On April 13, 1776 Anza left Monterey and returned to Tubac. Later, in 1777, Moraga and a group of settlers founded San José.

After his arrival back in Sonora, in 1777 Anza was appointed governor of New Mexico. His accomplishments did not stop there. Before his death in 1788 he led other expeditions, fought Indians, forged Indian treaties, commanded several presidios and was commander of all troops in Sonora. He died suddenly in 1788 at the age of 52.

Historian Herbert E. Bolton rates Anza's overland explorations and colonization fetes comparable to, if not more significant than Mackenzie's, Thompson's, Lewis and Clark's, Smith's or Fremont's.

Juan Bautista de Anza II, backed by powerful and influential Basque politicians and businessmen, opened an overland route from Sonora to the Pacific coast. More importantly, he was instrumental in the Spanish settlement of California. His expedition led to the establishment of Los Angeles, San Jose and San Francisco. The colonists he brought with him doubled the population of Alta California were the basis of the populations of these new settlements as were the soldiers who were posted at the presidios. The livestock he brought were the beginning of the large herds of the mission and rancho eras of California. Although Anza was the last Basque governor of New Mexico, he was never governor of California. However, there were five Basque governors of California, serving seven terms between 1792 and 1845. (In 1806 Basque governor of California, José Joaquin de Arrillaga, ordered fellow Basque José Joaquín de Maitorena to explore the interior of California. However, one year earlier in 1805 Gabriel Moraga, son of Joaquin Moraga, Anza's Basque lieutenant and founder of San José, became the first European to explore the central valley of California. He discovered and named the Merced, Tuolumne, Stanislaus, Calaveras and Mokelumne Rivers. He also named the areas later to become Sacramento and Modesto. He also discovered and named the San Joaquin River on one of his excursions. The name became synonymous with the entire central valley of California.) The Basques mentioned who came before

and after Juan Bautista de Anza played prominent roles in the history of California. However, it was because of Anza, his Basque heritage and his Basque supporters, that Alta California was changed from a few Spanish outposts to an actual colony of Spain that later would become the state of California.

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The Basques' involvement and accomplishments in the development of the New World are beginning to receive the recognition they deserve through the work of Donald Garate and others. Basque efforts in the settlement of the areas destined to become the southwestern states within our nation are an important part of these newly documented contributions.

To put this colonization into visual perspective, use a map of the United States. Start at the Pacific coast. Roughly gauge the distance between San Diego and San Francisco and then move approximately that same distance to the southeast then east, eventually ending at the western border of Louisiana. Basques and Basque capital were primarily responsible for the initial colonization of nearly this entire section of the United States. This includes Arizona, which was part of the province of New Mexico. Besides receiving a Basque name, the Arizona settlements of Tucson and Tubac have extensive Basque histories. In addition, the Basque colonization of New Mexico occurred before the Pilgrims had landed at Plymouth Rock and Basques began the settlement of Texas and California before the "original" thirteen colonies in New England had declared their independence from the British. While it can certainly be argued that our country's story began in those eastern colonies, Basques were already making U.S. history in the southwest.

For ease in reading, this paper has been written without footnotes. Information included in the paper may be found in the following sources.

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