

Mount Shasta Annotated Bibliography

Chapter 5

Early Exploration: Spanish Expeditions, 1808-21

These entries pertain to three Spanish expeditions into the upper areas of the Sacramento River Valley. The expeditions were led by Gabriel Moraga in 1808 and Luis Antonio Argüello in 1817 and 1821. Moraga's diary from 1808 records his act of assigning the name "Jesús María" to the river now known as the Sacramento River. The 1817 diary of Argüello expedition member Fray Narciso Duran contains what is often considered to be the first recorded sighting of Mt. Shasta. Duran wrote about a "high snow-covered hill," and a river near it, both named "Jesús María." The 1821 expedition diaries of Argüello himself and of Padre Blas Ordaz both mention "Los Quates" or "the Twins," possibly in reference to Mt. Lassen, Mt. Shasta and/or other mountains. Over the years historians have presented many theories and conflicting opinions over the routes of these three expeditions. The Argüello 1821 diary translated and published for the first time in 1992, adds details that the "Twins" were of equal form and height and nearly joined, and that they had been visited by the Scotsman John Anthony Gilroy some time before 1821. The true identities of the Jesús María "high snow covered hill," and of "los Quates" are, however, still unknown.

The [MS number] indicates the Mount Shasta Special Collection accession numbers used by the College of the Siskiyous Library.

[MS1095]. Amador, Jose Maria 1781-1883. **Memorias sobre la historia de California.** 1877. 'Por Jose Maria Amador; lo Escribio, dictado por el autor, Thomas Savage para la Bancroft Library.' Manuscript at the Bancroft Library. Not seen. C. L. Stewart states: "The untrustworthy memoirs of an old soldier who claimed to have accompanied Arguello on his expedition to the north in 1821" (see Stewart 1929, p. 135). 05. Early Exploration: Spanish Expeditions, 1808-21/40. Find List. [MS1095].

[MS1010]. Arguello, Luis 1784-1830. **The Diary of Captain Luis Antonio Arguello: The Last Spanish Expedition in California, October 17--November 17, 1821.** 1821. Translated by Vivian C. Fisher, with and introduction by Arthur Quinn. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California, The Friends of the Bancroft Library, 1992. No. 40 in the Series of Keepsakes. Manuscript in the collection of the Bancroft Library, catalogued as: Diario Formado en la Expedicion Emprendida el Diez y Siete de Octubre de 1821..., verificada por Disposicion del Se--or Coronel don Pablo Vizente de Sola, Governador de la alta California al Mando del Capitan...Luis Antonio Arguello...1821. Until the publication in 1992 of this translation of Arguello's diary, the only other major published original document of the 1821 expedition was the Father Blas Ordaz diary. The two diaries are very similar, so similar in fact that the translator suggests that Arguello wrote his diary after the expedition was completed using the Ordaz diary as a model. But Arguello adds many details not in the Ordaz version. In October of 1821, 70 men and 235 animals journeyed northward in the Sacramento Valley. Arguello records the number of hours traveled each day, and adding the hours together it computes that the expedition traveled from the straits of Carquinez, to the point they saw the 'Twins,' possibly Mt. Lassen, was 70 hours. Traveling at a speed of even 3 miles per hour would have given them at least 210 miles, certainly indicating they could have come within sight of Mt. Lassen or Mt. Shasta. Arguello's account of the 'Twins' adds significant visual details: "30 October--At nine in the morning I continued my itinerary directed by the guides of the previous village with whom I took the same same course to the north, until five in the afternoon when I considered it convenient to make a halt on the banks of the river Jesus Maria after having passed the villages named Checnoc [and] Yllalic, the latter being about about two leagues away from this place....The aforesaid place where I remain camped is at the foot of the Sierra Nevada and in front of the two peaks that are found in it and which the English interpreter John Anthony Gilroy knew. He says he has traveled around their contours and has given them the name 'The Twins' (according to what he knows). On the opposite side is the

river and presidio of the Columbia at a short distance. These hills in essence are very alike in their size and form and are almost joined. All the villages since that of Goroy to the last one of Yllalic inclusive are situated on the banks of the river Jesus Maria which, while not very wide, is deep enough and of regular capacity...." (pp. 28-29).

Note that Arguello makes no mention of snow on "The Twins" as they were seen in late October of 1821, consistent with the normal appearance of Mt. Lassen in late summer. The translator's preface contains two pages of commentary on the problems in identifying the route of the 1821 expedition, and states that "The Twins (twin peaks) have been cited by an equal numbers of scholars as either Shasta or Lassen" and that "A more scholarly publication is being planned after a more definitive study has been completed" (p. 15). Arguello states that the Twins are "in essence very much alike in their size and form and are almost joined," a statement which lends to the interpretation that the hills were Mount Lassen and Broke-off mountains. From a point near Red Bluff, California, this would have been an accurate description.

Note also that Arguello's diary states that John Anthony Gilroy had traveled around the contours of the Twins. The wording suggests that Gilroy had done so prior to this 1821 expedition. When and with what group Gilroy had visited the region is not known, though it is possible that he was in the advance party of soldiers mentioned in Duran's diary of the 1817 Arguello expedition (see Duran Diary... 1911). According to the introduction, John Anthony Gilroy was a Scotsman, and the first foreign settler in Spanish California (p. 6).

The diary contains much of general interest. For one thing, the diary indicates that a high level of violence was used in dealing with those Arguello consistently called the 'heathens.' The day after writing about the 'Twins,' Arguello wrote: "31 October--Notwithstanding the [signs] of this point and of the previous ones, I began the march at nine this day taking the course to the west, which I took to the following road to the foot of a hill that is found in front of the Nevada, which is about fifteen leagues away. The first runs from south to north, making me wonder if this is the one that ends in the port of Bodega (a Russian possession) At the foot of this mountain range, I found a village....its people who put up resistance...let fly arrows....ordering the Infantry and Cavalry into battalion formation. At this point I ordered them to fire, but [the heathens] stood firmly. At the first volley that the entire troop fired, the crowd fled with continuous howling that lasted about two hours afterwards..." (p. 29-30). Earlier in the diary Arguello records the number of natives killed at certain villages on the route. Many indications of the military nature of the expedition are evident. They carried and used a cannon, and at one point early in the journey, one of their mules, with 2000 ammunition cartridges, was disturbed by the 'untamed ones' and sank in the Jesus Maria River. Eight soldiers tried to recover the loss but could not find the mule on account of darkness (p. 25).

The diary also intimates that Russian explorers had been in the Sacramento Valley. Arguello wrote: "25-October....came upon a village situated on the banks of the of the river Jesus Maria named Goroy....I began to receive news of the unknown establishment of foreigners of which I had already been told and which the object of this expedition is to discover. The news was that two men dressed in our style and who also used firearms as we do had come from the next village" (p. 23). 05. Early Exploration: Spanish Expeditions, 1808-21. [MS1010].

[MS1012]. Duran, Fray Narciso 1776-1846. **Diario de la expedicion de reconocimiento...1817 May 13-26.** 1817. Manuscript in the holdings of the Bancroft Library. Bancroft Library cataloging record states: "Explorations, in Company with father Ramon Abella, Lieutenant Luis Arguello and soldiers, of the lower Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers. Notes on the Indians encountered. With this: Carta del lieutenant Arguello al gobernador Pablo de Sola. (San Francisco. May 26, 1817) 12 p. A.Ms.S. 30cm.: Letter incorporating diary, May 13-26, of expedition in company with Fathers Duran and Abella. From the Cowen Collection. Includes typed transcript of the Arguello letter only." 05. Early Exploration: Spanish Expeditions, 1808-21. [MS1012].

[MS198]. Duran, Narciso Fray 1776-1846. **Expedition on the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers in 1817: Diary of Fray Narciso Duran.** Berkeley, Calif.: University of California, 1911. Translation of an important Spanish diary containing what has often been called the first recorded sighting of present-day Mount Shasta. The diary entry for May 20, 1817 reads: "At about ten leagues to the northwest of this place we saw the very high hill called by soldiers that went near its slope Jesus Maria, It is entirely covered with snow. They say a great river of the same name runs near it, and that it enters the Sacramento River, and they conjecture that it may be some branch of the Columbia. This I have heard from some soldier; let the truth be what it may" (p. 15). Note that the short distance of "ten leagues" would have put the explorers perhaps 20 to 30 miles south of present-day Mount Shasta. But the diary indicates that the group was only part-way up the main Sacramento Valley; thus there is some doubt as to what mountain was actually seen. Nonetheless, the mention of the Columbia River leads a good deal of credence to the possibility that the snow-covered Jesus Maria was indeed Mount Shasta. 05. Early Exploration: Spanish Expeditions, 1808-21. [MS198].

[MS1241]. Engelhardt, Charles Anthony. **...San Francisco or Mission Dolores.** In: Zephyrin. **in religion** [?]. Chicago, Ill.: 1924. Source of Citation: Stewart 1929 #83 Stewart states: 'Contains large portions in translation of

Fr. Ordaz's journal of Arguello's expedition of 1821.' 05. Early Exploration: Spanish Expeditions, 1808-21/40. Find List. [MS1241].

[MS1003]. Farnham, Thomas Jefferson 1804-1848. **Travels in the Californias, and Scenes in the Pacific Ocean**. New York: 1844. As in his 1841 *Travels in the Great Western Prairies...* (see Farnham 1843) Farnham named Mt. Shasta as "Mt. Jackson" (p. 337).

Farnham's account adds to the controversy over the location of the Jesus Maria River, first named by Gabriel Moraga in 1808 (see Moraga 1957). Farnham's Jesus Maria river, which also appears on his map accompanying this book, is undoubtedly not the present-day Sacramento as it was, perhaps, to Moraga. The question as to the location of the Jesus Maria river is important in specifying the location of the high snow-covered hill, called the Jesus Maria, near the river Jesus Maria, seen by members of Arguello's 1817 expedition (see Duran "Diary..." 1911).

Farnham's Jesus Maria river seems to be a different river from Moraga's and Duran's. Farnham's map accompanying this book shows the river to be in the present day Napa Valley region. Farnham also says: "The Jesus Maria River is a small stream which rises at the distance of twenty miles from the Ocean, among that part of the Snowy Mountains immediately southwest of Cape Mendocino. Its head-springs are among the perpetual snows of those highlands; and flowing about three hundred miles, over precipices and through prairies, it falls into the northwest part of the bay of San Francisco" (p. 336). The map was also included in a condensed 1947 Biobooks edition entitled: "Travels in California, with map." 05. Early Exploration: Spanish Expeditions, 1808-21. [MS1003].

[MS1011]. Moraga, Gabriel 1767-1823. **Diario de la tercera expedicion...a los rios del Norte**. Sept. 25-Oct. 23, 1808. Manuscript in the holdings of the Bancroft Library. Bancroft Library cataloging record states: "Diary of expeditions from Mission San Jose to explore for location of missions. With number of Indian villages seen and a list of the rivers with the distances between. With this: Carta (Nov. 12, 1808) de Luis Antonio Arguello al Governador Jose Joaquin Arrillaga...1 p. A.L.S. 20 cm.; letter forwarding Moraga's diary of the expedition. Includes transcripts of diary and letter." 05. Early Exploration: Spanish Expeditions, 1808-21. [MS1011].

[MS953]. Moraga, Gabriel 1767-1823. **The Diary of Ensign Gabriel Moraga's Expedition of Discovery in the Sacramento Valley, 1808**. [Los Angeles, Calif.]: Glen Dawson, 1957. '300 copies. Designed and printed by Lawton Kennedy.' Moraga left the Mission San Jose on Sept. 25, 1808. On the 11th day out they reached the northernmost extent of their travel. Moraga wrote: "Today we continued north-northwest upstream, and about 2 leagues one hundred and thirty armed Indians appeared...Then travelling along the same river I went about 8 leagues, with about sixty Indians following among us amazed by the horses. These Indians knew no malice whatsoever. They told us that as far as they had gone the river had no ford; but that it might have one. So I determined to turn back from here because about ten of the animals were spent. This river must be 25 to 30 varas [a Spanish vara = about 33 inches (p. 34)] wide and very deep; there is scarcely any current, and both sides of the river have steep banks. It flows to the south, and comes from the north-northwest. We named it the Jesus Maria. The valley continues on between north and northwest. The sierra is about 2 leagues distant in a westerly direction from the river, and in between there is another river, the trees of which we saw. The Indians told us that it had a good ford, but I did not reach it because of the following reasons: My horses were becoming tired, provisions were getting low, and rain threatened us with the possibility of being isolated. The Indians also told me that there was a sea on the other side of the sierra, and not a river. That is all for today" (pp. 20-21). The "Jesus Maria" according to the editor, was the present-day northern Sacramento River. What Moraga had two days earlier named as the "Sacramento River" was present-day Feather River (p. 18). In a foot note, the editor refers the reader to Charles Wilkes's comments about the confusing names of the Jesus Maria and the Sacramento rivers (p. 33). A map by the editor helps one visualize the route of Moraga in 1808, and the depicted position of Sutter Buttes helps accurately locate the Jesus Maria river named by Moraga (map facing p. 26).

Note that in 1817 Fray Narciso Duran wrote of a high snow-covered hill and a river near its base both called the Jesus Maria. This 1817 comment is considered to be the first recorded sighting of Mt. Shasta (see Duran Diary... 1911). The fact that the Moraga diary of 1808 records the naming of the upper Sacramento as the Jesus Maria indicates the probable correctness of the name Jesus Maria as a place name of far northern California. There are however, early maps from various sources which show the name Jesus Maria applied to the Napa Valley region rivers. Nonetheless, the Moraga Diary is most likely the best source of information as to the original location of this important river. 05. Early Exploration: Spanish Expeditions, 1808-21. [MS953].

[MS1013]. Morrison, Raymond Kenneth. **Luis Antonio Arguello: First Mexican Governor of California**. Journal of the West (publisher), 1963? Publisher's offprint with new pagination. First appeared in Journal of the West, Vol. 2, No. 2, April, 1963; and Vol 2, No. 3, 1963. Biography of Arguello. Of the expedition to the north of

1821, the author says that the group reached a point as far north as present-day Cottonwood Creek (p. 9). No mention made of "los Quates" or "the Twins," thought to have been Mt. Shasta and Shastina, or Mount Lassen and Broke-off, or Mount Shasta and Mount Lassen, etc. 05. Early Exploration: Spanish Expeditions, 1808-21. [MS1013].

[MS358]. Ordaz, Blas Padre. [diary of the Arguello 1821 expedition to the north]. In: Bancroft, Hubert Howe 1832-1918. **History of California: Vol. 2, 1801-1924**. San Francisco, Calif.: A.L. Bancroft and Company, Publishers, 1885. pp. 446-449. Father Ordaz, who kept a diary of the trip northward, was chaplain to a group of about 70 soldiers and officers under the command of Captain Arguello. According to Bancroft the group set out from San Francisco on Oct. 18, 1821 in boats, and after some days of encampment on the south side of the straights they transported men and horse to the northern side where they began on Oct. 22 a nine-day overland journey up the Rio de Jesus Maria. Bancroft considers the Rio de Jesus Maria to be one and the same as present-day Sacramento River. On Oct. 30th Ordaz wrote: "the place where we are situated at the foot of the Sierra Madre, whence there have been seen by the English interpreter Juan Antonio two mountains called Los Quates--the Twins--on the opposite side of which are the presidio and river of the Columbia" (p. 447).

Note that the Arguello diary of this expedition states that the English intrepereer John Anthony Gilroy had traveled around the contours of these 'Twins' (see Arguello The Diary of Captain Luis Antonio Arguello: The Last Spanish Expedition in California, October 17--November 17, 1821. 1992).

Bancroft includes a list of the Indian villages passed by on the banks of the river, and determines that the group had traveled as far as Red Bluff or perhaps as far as the "latitude of Shasta or Weaverville." Bancroft states that they turned southward over the mountains, and on November 6 they saw the "coast of the Russian Establishment at Bodega" (p. 448). Note that this would mean the group would have traveled through the mountains from the present-day Red Bluff area to a place from which they could have seen Bodega, in just about seven days, which is possible but would be a difficult journey with horses and such a large group. The "Twins" that they had seen were possibly the Mt. Lassen peaks, or Mt. Shasta and Mt. Lassen, or Mt. Shasta alone, or Mt. Shasta and Mt. McLoughlin, or perhaps something else entirely. Note that a map by Peter Lassen from circa 1843 shows the "Sister Buttes" as the name of Lassen Peak and Brokeoff Mountain (see Swartzlow 1982, p. 14.)

In a footnote on p. 446 Bancroft notes the existence of several unpublished narratives written by other members of the expedition though Bancroft does not feel any of them are reliable accounts. One of these accounts implies that the group got as far as the Willamette. These other narratives could, however, hold clues as to the nature of "los Quatos."

The true identity of the Rio Jesus Maria is also problematic. At least three different rivers have been named as the Rio Jesus Maria on early maps.

As a whole Bancroft left out much in paraphrasing the diary of Father Ordaz. 05. Early Exploration: Spanish Expeditions, 1808-21. [MS358].

[MS596]. Ordaz, Blas Padre. **La Ultima Exploracion Espanola en America**. In: Revista de Indias. Apr.-June, 1958. Vol. 18. No. 72. pp. 227-241. 'Padre Blas Ordaz.' Introduction (pp. 227-230) and notes by Donald C. Cutter. Journal published by Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas, Madrid, Spain. Transcription from the original Spanish document owned by the Santa Barbara Mission, Santa Barbara, Calif. The introduction, notes, and transcription are in Spanish. This is the Ordaz diary of the 1821 Arquello expedition to the north, and it was in Ordaz's diary that a mention is made of "los Quates" or "the twins" thought by several scholars to be Mt. Shasta:

"Dia 30. Habiendo llegado a terminos de que los Interpretes ignorasen el idma de los naturales, fue necesario hablarles por se--as para que comprehendiesen se les pedian unos Guias; a cuyo fin se ofrecieron algunos, y entre 8 y 9 se dio principio a la marcha, con rumbo a el norte, en cuyo transito se allaron las Rancherias Cheno y Llali a cuya corta distancia se acampo la Tropa por ser el paraje bastante proporcionado, siendo ya las cinco de la tarde. Los terminos en que nos allamos se hallan situados a el Pie de la sierra. Nebada, de donde se an disbisado por el Interprete Ingles Juan Antonio dos monta--as nombrados los Quates, a culyo lado opuesta se allan el Presidio y Rio de la Coluymbia. Las Rancherias astaqui se allan situados a las orillas del Rio Jesus Maria de donde el dia de ma--ana se emprendera dibersa direccion, segun lo indican las se--s que dan los naturales" (p. 237).

In a footnote to the above mention of "los Quates," usually translated as "the Twins," Donald C. Cutter writes: "Los Quates son, en toda probabilidad, Mount Shasta y su segundo picacho, Shastina. Aunque no tama--o igual, son los unicos que tienen este aspecto, al menos en parte" (p. 237). Cutter also states that the expedition, in his opinion, reached a northernmost latitude near the present site of Redding, California. 05. Early Exploration: Spanish Expeditions, 1808-21. [MS596].

[MS597]. Papen, Helen. **Spanish Explorations in the Interior of California, 1804-1821**. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California, 1919 (Thesis, Master's). Not seen. Source of Citation: Stuhl Bibliography. Translation of Ordaz's 1821 diary. 40. Find List/05. Early Exploration: Spanish Expeditions, 1808-21. [MS597].

[MS720]. Priestley, Herbert Ingram 1875-1944. **Franciscan Explorations in California**. Glendale, Calif.: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1946. pp. 119-121. The author comments on the Duran diary from the 1817 Arguello expedition. Unlike some historians, this author apparently does not equate the "high hill" seen by the explorers with present-day Mt. Shasta, nor does the author equate the Jesus Maria River with the upper Sacramento river. The author writes: "Ten leagues to the northwest they descried a very high hill called Jesus Maria by some of the soldiers who had sighted its slope. The Rancho Rio Jesus Maria is now on the Sacramento near Cache creek, between Gray's Bend and Vernon. Dœran mentions a large river there entering the Sacramento 'which they supposed was some branch of the Columbia;' this was Feather river. This expedition had reached a point midway between Clarksbug and Freeport" (p. 121).

Priestly was the former director of the Bancroft Library and a professor of Mexican History. The Dœran manuscript is housed at the Bancroft Library. 05. Early Exploration: Spanish Expeditions, 1808-21. [MS720].

[MS1280]. Schenck, William Egbert. **Historic Aboriginal Groups of the California Delta Region**. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1926. Source of Citation: Stewart 1929 #330 Not seen. Stewart states: "Of great value in working out Arguello's route northward though the Sacramento Valley in 1821." 05. Early Exploration: Spanish Expeditions, 1808-21/40. Find List. [MS1280].