

THE CROSS AND THE SPADE

Archaeology and the Discovery of the Earliest Serra Chapels at the Royal Presidio of Monterey, 1770-1772

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Before leaving this bay we erected a cross upon the beach with an inscription cut on the wood which said: "Dig! At the foot thou wilt find a writing."

Miguel Costansó, 10 December 1769¹

Introduction

As the engineer assigned to the expeditionary force commanded by Governor Gaspar de Portolà (14 July 1769 to 24 January 1770), Miguel Costansó's narrative of the Spanish expedition from *San Diego de Alcalá* to *San Francisco de Asís* was penned in a document of circa 361 Castilian words, which was then buried beneath the massive wooden cross planted on a beach on the margins of the Monterey Bay.¹ It was this document to which Costansó referred in his command to *escarba* or "Dig!" beneath the cross so noted in the hopes that future expeditionaries would know of the expedition's exploits in their momentous quest to identify and settle the Monterey Bay. Ultimately the expedition, then sorely short of supplies, and without prospects for assuring the identification of the Monterey Bay with those resources and that information then at their disposal, departed without having confirmed the rediscovery of the Monterey Bay. As such, Miguel Costansó's diary entry of 10 December 1769 provides an apt metaphor (not to mention, mandate) for the archaeology of the Monterey Bay, and for that matter, that momentous effort that constitutes the basis

About the Author

Dr. Rubén G. Mendoza is an archaeologist, writer, photographer and founding faculty member of the California State University, Monterey Bay. Professor Mendoza has directed major archaeological investigations at missions San Juan Bautista, San Carlos Borromeo, San Miguel Arcángel, Nuestra Señora de la Soledad, and the 16th century Ex-Convento de la Concepción in Puebla, Mexico. His efforts on behalf of the Royal Presidio Chapel Conservation Project was awarded the California Preservation Foundation Preservation Design Award for 2009. A charter member of both the California Missions Foundation, and the California Mission Curators and Directors Conference of Mission Santa Barbara, Professor Mendoza served as a consult to, and a Literacy Place Mentor for, Scholastic, Inc.'s Time Detectives Literacy Place Mentors 3rd grade curriculum distributed nationally, internationally, and re-published for Spanish-speaking school children. He has published over one-hundred manuscripts, reviews, and scores of images spanning pre-Columbian, Colonial, and California missions era art and architecture and solar geometry, American Indian science, technology, and medicine, and modern material cultures. His long-term contributions to "furthering the preservation and protection of the California Missions" was acknowledged by the California Mission Curators and Directors Conference with the granting of the Father Fermín Francisco de Lasuén Award for 2010. As Project Manager to the San Juan Bautista



About the Author, cont.

Mission Conservation Program, Dr. Mendoza is charged with professional oversight of the mission restoration effort documented in “Archaeology and Community Service Learning at a California Mission, 1995-2008” (2009). He has served as co-author and contributing editor for a host of publications for teachers and students concerned with the California missions, including *The California Missions Source Book* (2009), *The California Missions’ Timeline* (2009), and *Fermín Francisco de Lasuén: An Illustrated Timeline* (2012). Professor Mendoza’s participation in the Manhattan-based 2011 NEH Summer Institute for College and University Teachers, *American Material Culture: Nineteenth-Century New York*, inspired new and innovative pedagogical strategies for the analysis and interpretation of architecture and material cultures. The NEH program in question in turn prompted Professor Mendoza’s development of the first-ever National Endowment for the Humanities Landmarks of American History and Culture: Workshops for School Teachers program devoted exclusively to the study of the California missions, and titled *The Fourteenth Colony: Native Californians, Missions, Presidios, and Colonists on the Spanish Frontier, 1769-1848*.

Figure 1. The commemorative redwood cross installed by the late Diocesan curator Sir Henry “Harry” Downie on the shores of the Monterey Bay served to commemorate the installation of a similar cross by the members of the Portola Expedition of 1769. Photo © Rubén G. Mendoza, 2008.³

for the present narrative of exploration and discovery.

Archaeological investigations spanning the period extending from 2006 through 2008 were undertaken by me (in my capacity as the project archaeologist) for the purpose of assessing the architectural heritage of the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey* (1770-1848).⁴ The Royal Presidio Chapel Conservation Project, undertaken under the auspices of the Diocese of Monterey, recruited me to assess the architectural history and structural integrity of the Royal Presidio Chapel, *La Capilla Real*, or San Carlos Cathedral in 2006 (Mendoza 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2009, 2012). Though earlier archaeological investigations succeeded in defining the stratigraphic

relationships necessary for basic cultural and geological interpretations of the Royal Presidio of Monterey (Pilling 1950; Howard 1971; May 1974, 1992; Parkman 1979; Edwards and Simpson-Smith 1993; Costello 1994), such studies, with perhaps the exception of Howard (1971) fell short, or were hampered by logistical and or practical constraints in their efforts to lend themselves to the elaboration and elucidation of the architectural history of the site (CA-MNT-271H; California Historical Landmark No. 105; Tays 1936; Pilling 1950). By contrast, this investigation was partitioned into three distinct phases, the first and most systematic centered on an archaeological programme of Phase 1 testing for subsurface archaeological (read architectural) features identified with specific localities adjoining the Royal Presidio Chapel. Phase 2 spanned the summer of 2007 and entailed an intensive campaign centered on the monitoring and mitigation of subsurface architectural remains encountered during the course of trenching activities specific to the Royal Presidio Chapel Conservation Project. The Phase 3 operation was undertaken in July of 2008, and soon resulted in the recovery of perhaps the most significant findings to date regarding the earliest Christian houses of worship identified with *Alta California* and the ministry of Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, the Apostle of California (Mendoza 2009, 2012, Jack Williams, personal communication, July 29, 2008).

Said findings devolved from the archaeological recovery of the granite and basalt footings of the 2nd or Serra Chapel of 1772; and shortly thereafter, the identification and recovery of portions of the 1st or Serra Chapel of 1770; in turn defined in terms of the “Missionaries’ Quarters” of 1770, and the southern perimeter defensive wall or *palisada* or Palisade of 1770. This paper will as such review, assess, and interpret that new body of archaeological evidence specific to the identification of Fray Junípero Serra’s *Capilla de San José*, and weigh its potential for rewriting the architectural and cultural heritage of this most significant of early California historic sites.

Research Design

The archaeological undertakings of Donald M. Howard, an area avocationalist or community scholar, remains a significant point of departure for assessing long standing questions and scholarly conundrums



regarding the evolution of the architectural and cultural histories of the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey* (Howard 1971, 1976, 1978a, 1978b, 1981, 1997). According to Simpson-Smith and Edwards (1995: 5),

Figure 2. View of the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey* as depicted by José Cardero in this Malaspina Expedition illustration dated to 1791. Perspective is from the southeast to the northwest. Note that the high-pitched thatched roof of the Serra Chapel of 1772 is visible immediately north of the new site of construction identified with the Chapel of 1794. Illustration courtesy of the Royal Presidio Chapel Conservation Project.⁵

“Research questions such as: 1) where are Presidio related features located, 2) who used them, and 3) how were they used, are the basis for the on-going studies at the Presidio in general, and this investigation in particular.” By contrast with this earlier assessment of the projected primary research goals of future work at the Royal Presidio Chapel, much remains to be done with deploying archaeological strategies for assessing: 4) the quintessential architectural histories of the Royal Presidio Chapel site and complex, 5) Presidio political-economy and daily life ways as inferred from the recovery of material culture, and 6) trade and exchange as deduced from the particularly diverse and rich array of Spanish colonial and Mexican Indian ceramic traditions in turn recovered from the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey*. Whereas preliminary short-term objectives of the research under consideration sought to more fully target the elaboration of the architectural histories of the Royal Presidio Chapel, baptistery and sacristy additions, *cuartel* or barracks buildings, and perimeter defensive features (Schuetz-Miller 1994; Mendoza 2007c), the primary objective was to discern the structural integrity of sub-grade or buried architectural features and their displacement across the landscape (Preusser 1996; Twilley 1996; Kimbro 1999; Mendoza 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2009). A secondary goal was with more fully interpreting the material culture, political-economy, and daily life ways of the soldiers and civilians who once graced the hallowed grounds in question (Williams 1985, 1993; Lucido 2013; see this volume).

Project Description

The project team of the Royal Presidio Chapel Conservation Program, including Project Manager Cathy Leiker and a host of consultants (architects, conservators, and engineers) proposed (a) the conservation treatment, renovation, and retrofitting of the existing Royal Presidio Chapel (*Capilla Real de Monterey*) structure; (b) the removal of extant concrete stucco coatings used at various times to seal the stone walls of the Chapel (aka: San Carlos Cathedral) during the course of the past century and a half, the effect of which has been to seal moisture within the stone; and (c) the installation of French drains and related modifications as needed so as to assure the structural integrity and seismic stability of the Royal Presidio Chapel.⁶ Initial efforts for the excavation program upon which the cultural resources assessment was based were undertaken during the period extending from Wednesday, 6 September through Friday, 8 December of 2006 (Phase 1), and again from 29 May through 9 June, 2007 for Phase 2. Phase 3 was in turn centered on the archaeological monitoring of French drain-related trenching activities and extended from June through August of 2007. Phase 4 spanned a two-week period beginning on 28 July 2008, and specifically targeted the excavation and mitigation of the Serra Chapel of 1772.

While the fall 2006 Phase 1 field investigation combined both traditional

and nontraditional methods for recovery and analysis of archaeological deposits, this latter aspect of the investigation nevertheless took great care to recover materials and features, particularly where pertinent to the analysis of the site's architectural history. Despite the fact that the Phase 2 (summer 2007) research design and excavation strategy relied on the use of a TB016 backhoe, all such Test Units were assigned 1 x 1 meter coverage as per their respective relationships to specific points on a grid. The grid was in turn anchored on the west side of the Chapel to the northwest corner of the façade, and on the east nave to the juncture point of the east nave and tower. Those units situated between the 1858 Apse and east Transept at the southeast, were in turn situated, and thereby arbitrarily anchored, by way of the juncture point of the Apse and east Transept. Only Units 9 and 15 were situated off the grid by virtue of the specified "pothole" locations requested by the project architects.

The Phase 3 portion of this investigation entailed the archaeological monitoring of a major trenching operation intended to accommodate subsurface or French drains (see Figure 3, below). As a result of water intrusion and salt erosion, those architects and engineers noted in the foregoing narrative determined that the area circumscribing the Royal Presidio Chapel proper would require the installation of a system of French drains at or near bedrock. Devcon Construction was contracted to undertake the excavation and installation program in this instance, and I was recruited to monitor any and all construction-related excavation. The backhoe operation in question extended the scope of the Phase 2 operation, albeit by virtue of the need to prepare trenches to accommodate the system of French drains so noted. Ultimately, this portion of the investigation entailed the excavation of some thirty-two 22' to 25' foot trench spans, and the recovery of thousands of individual specimens collected by way of lot finds and or in situ collection and documentation strategies.

Those archaeological methods identified with Phase 4 were the direct byproduct of the inadvertent exposure by contractors of the foundation footings identified with the Serra Chapel of 1772. Because archaeological monitoring had been suspended in the fall of 2007, the July 2008 exposure of the features in question was largely unanticipated. On the afternoon of July 28th of 2008, I was notified

Figure 3. In order to mitigate against the continued deterioration of the shale and mudstone due to water intrusion and salt erosion, the Royal Presidio Conservation Project of the Diocese of Monterey undertook the large-scale installation of a French drain system. In order to see through this process, fourteen 22-foot to 25-foot long and 18-inch wide trenches were excavated to bedrock along the entirety of the perimeter of the Royal Presidio Chapel (aka: San Carlos Cathedral). Photo © Rubén G. Mendoza, 2007.





of the inadvertent exposure of historic deposits in the forecourt of the San Carlos Cathedral by the Royal Presidio Conservation Project Manager. That evening, I arranged a site visit and at that time it was determined that materials and middens dislodged at said location were in fact cultural, and historically sensitive. Therefore, construction-related project work in this sector was temporarily halted so as to provide the archaeology team with the opportunity to properly investigate, and thereby propose, mitigation measures for the buried features so noted.

As such, the Phase 4 undertaking in question was initially intended as strictly exploratory, and directed towards an assessment for potential mitigation measures for the structure in question. Nevertheless, during the course of a ten-day period encompassing the first week of August of 2008, the South and West foundation footings of what was ultimately identified with the Serra Chapel of 1772 were exposed for the first time by the archaeology project team by way of a salvage excavation intended to reveal said features and their respective relationships to ancillary structures such as the Sacristy of 1778 and the floors of the original sanctuary (see Figures 4 and 5, above).

Figure 4. (above, left) Within a year of those trenching operations that spanned the entirety of the summer of 2007, the chance discovery of the Serra Chapel of 1772 resulted in yet another major undertaking to mitigate and salvage all pertinent architectural information needed to assess the integrity of those subsurface features identified with the religious architecture in question. Photo © Rubén G. Mendoza, 2008.

Figure 5. (above, right) In order to effect the trenching of the whole of the perimeter of the Royal Presidio Chapel for the purpose of installing a French drain system, some areas of the site required the saw-cut removal of concrete pavements. In this instance, it was necessary to span the entrance and main facade of the San Carlos Cathedral in order to complete the trenching operation of 2007. Photo © Rubén G. Mendoza, 2007.

Upon completion of the investigation of the Serra Chapel of 1772, and the ancillary Sacristy of 1778, I was notified by construction contractors that additional utility lines were to be laid in the area immediately west of the Royal Presidio Chapel. Despite assurances from the contractor that excavations would not exceed twelve inches in depth, it was determined that the archaeological sensitivity of the area was such that cultural resources monitoring would be required. So as to allay concerns that the archaeological monitoring in question would not hinder progress on the planned trenching operation, I proposed a one-day trenching operation that made use of forensic or crime scene evidence markers to demarcate features exposed during the course of trenching operations (see Figure 6, below). In this way, a dozen buried architectural features were identified in short order. Significantly, once mapped with respect to the Serra Chapel of 1772, and those features exposed and mapped during the course of the 2007 field season, it was soon determined that an ancillary structure had been exposed. Given that the south wall of the ancillary structure in question was found to consist of charred postholes and decomposed granite rock footings that aligned with similar such features identified with the area adjacent to the south wall of the Serra Chapel of 1772, it was subsequently determined that the structure in question was originally anchored to the original southern defensive curtain or stockade of 1770. Given descriptions that indicate that Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, celebrated the first high mass at the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey* within a pole and thatch warehouse tasked for use as a provisional sanctuary on that occasion; this investigation thereafter proceeded on the assumption that the latter structure in question was in effect the structure used by Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, as the Chapel of 1770.

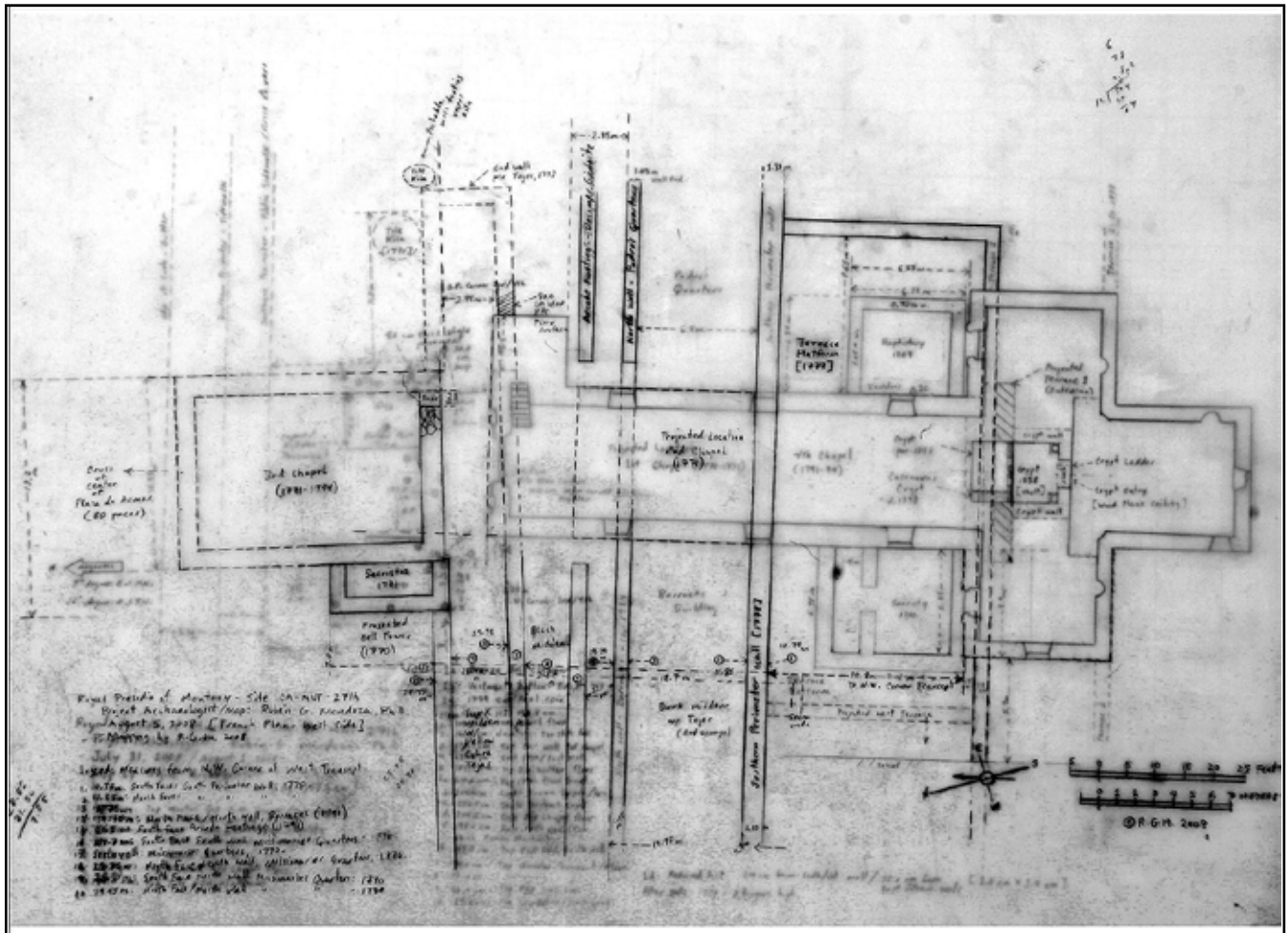
This latter interpretation is based on three key observations. First, the north wall of the range-like structure in question was found to have joined the south wall, and at the same time shared a doorway with the southeast corner of the Chapel of 1772, thereby suggesting its continued use despite its provisional nature as a large *jacal* or *jacalon* pole-and-thatch structure (Mendoza and Cruz Torres 1994). Second, during the course of the 2007 Phase 3 trenching operations, a fine masonry platform composed of shale blocks was found at the juncture of the southwest corner of the Chapel of 1772 and the interior compartment of the proposed Chapel of 1770. As such, we surmised that the platform in question may well have served as an altar platform within the Chapel of 1770 proper. Finally, given that both the Chapel of 1772, and that of the Royal Presidio Chapel of 1794, occupied the same hallowed ground; it stands to reason that each of these structures were situated so as to



Figure 6. The one-day trenching operation undertaken in the area immediately to the west of the Chapel of 1794 (aka: San Carlos Cathedral) made use of forensic or crime scene evidence markers on an ongoing basis so as to demarcate subsurface architectural features encountered during the course of excavation. The evidence markers in this instance serve to delineate the south (Marker 6) and north (Marker 10) exterior faces of the Missionary's Quarters of 1770. See Figure 7 field map, below. Photo © Rubén G. Mendoza, 2008.

acknowledge the sacred geography of the original site of the first Chapel of 1770 (See Figure 7).

Project Findings



Key archaeological findings from the fall 2006 field investigations at the Royal Presidio Chapel indicate that (a) archaeological soundings at Unit o resulted in the recovery and exposure of the decomposed granite arcade foundation footings of the southeast extension of the late 1770s era Padres' Quarters room block (replete with the telltale signs of the fire that destroyed portions of the complex in 1789), (b) recovery and exposure of the decomposed granite and shale north wall foundations, and crushed mudstone or Arkosic sandstone flooring, of the 1810 Baptistery; (c) recovery of the granite boulder foundation footings of the southern perimeter defensive curtain or wall of 1778 (identified in association with a single Spanish silver *real* coin dated to 1779) (see Figure 8), (d) recovery of the decomposed granite and shale "vestry" cross-wall and north wall foundations and crushed mudstone flooring of the original adobe sacristy (along with the buried extension of the perimeter defensive wall on the

Figure 7. Field map of subsurface archaeological features identified with the Serra Chapel of 1772 and the recovery of the southern perimeter defensive curtain or stockade wall and Missionaries' Quarters and Chapel of 1770. Note that the northern (left) end of the Serra Chapel of 1772 has been foreshortened or truncated in this field rendering, and is therefore not to scale. Photo © Rubén G. Mendoza, 2008.

west), and (e) a particularly eclectic and diverse collection of Spanish, Mexican Indian, Asian, and British earthenware directly attributable to the Presidio's role as the gateway to Hispanic *Alta California*.

The resumption of archaeological investigations at the Royal Presidio Chapel on 29 May of 2007 in turn resulted in the identification of a number of significant new features through the period ending August of 2007, not the least of which include (f) the exposure of a massive 125.0 cm wide terrace (or retaining) wall footing (Terrace 1) and associated colonial era trash midden, (g) recovery of a secondary terrace (or retaining) wall (Terrace 2) just south, and running parallel to Terrace 1; (h) exposure of the east wall, and northeast corner, of the 1810 Baptistery in Trench Units 13 and 14; (i) additional exposure, and thereby confirmation, of the arcade corridor footings of the east-west oriented Padres' Quarters range building located just south of, and parallel to, the south face of the bell tower at Unit 12; and (j) recovery of a particularly early pavement or wall and floor feature



Figure 8. Recovered from beneath the massive granite boulder rubble-filled pavement constituting the Terrace 1 feature (that made possible the construction of the later Chapel of 1794) was this Spanish silver *real* coin that ultimately served to date the construction of the terrace feature to 1779. Interestingly, this coin was recovered at bedrock in the area just south of the southern perimeter defensive curtain or wall of 1778. Photo © Rubén G. Mendoza, 2006.

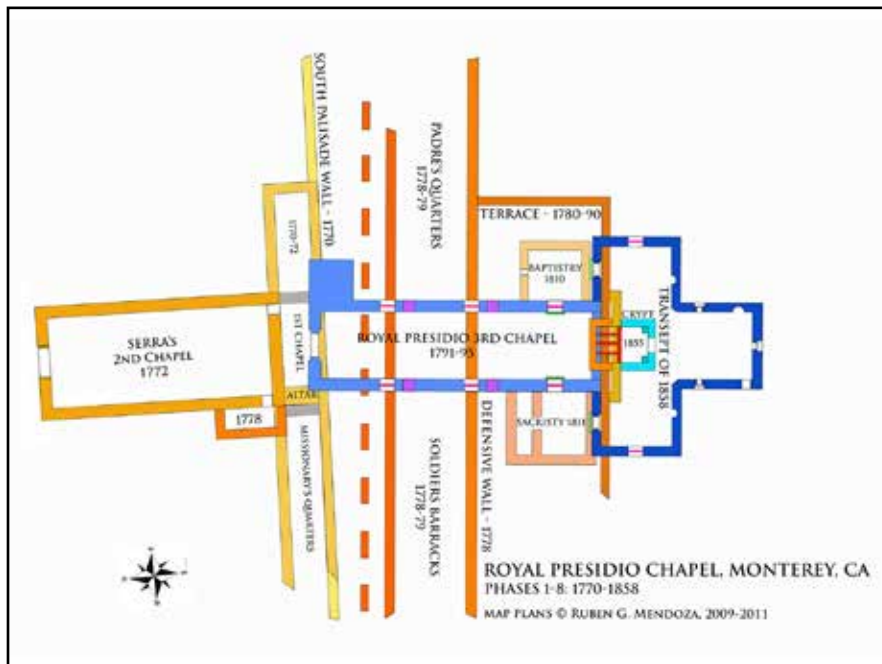


Figure 9. Plan view of all subsurface features recovered and identified as the result of that archaeology undertaken by way of controlled excavations and trench-related monitoring at the Royal Presidio Chapel of Monterey. In this instance, the Missionaries' Quarters and Chapel of 1770 are identified in relationship to Serra's second Chapel of 1772. Note, all phases of the proposed architectural history have been color-coded so as to distinguish each phase of construction one from the other, and only the dark and light blue areas represent the extant or modern footprint of the San Carlos Cathedral. Map plan © Rubén G. Mendoza, 2011.

at a depth of one meter at or beneath the northeast corner of the bell wall and tower or *campanario* (Trench Unit 11) (see Figure 9, above).

During the course of construction-related activity at the site in July of 2008, contractors exposed several granite boulders from the forecourt area of the Royal Presidio Chapel. So as to determine both the source of the boulders, and mitigate against the possibility of further damage to subsurface

archaeological features, the archaeology project team mobilized around the excavation of the buried structure in question. So began the investigation of what was ultimately determined to constitute the Serra Chapel of 1772. In addition to the recovery of the (k) granite south and west wall foundations of the Serra Chapel of 1772, the project team worked to expose the (l) Roman mortar-paved granite boulder pavements constituting the floor of the Serra Chapel of 1772, and soon thereafter, the contours of the exposed foundation footing of the (m) Sacristy of 1778 was redefined and mapped by way of archaeological investigations at that site located adjacent to the west wall of the Serra Chapel of 1772.⁷

Finally, with completion of the exploratory investigation of the Serra Chapel of 1772 in August of 2008, contractors noted that they would require one additional trench excavation for the accommodation of utilities lines necessary for a fire suppression system. This latter effort, which was conducted through the course of a single day on 6 August of 2008, proved particularly significant to the interpretation of the earliest architectural history of the original palisade and southern perimeter defensive curtain of 1770. Despite the contractor's concerns with further delays arising from the monitoring and mitigation of archaeological features, I nevertheless insisted on the continued monitoring and mitigation of buried historic features affected by the trenching operations, and as such all exposed foundation and midden materials were duly noted. As a result, it soon became clear by way of the conjoined mapping of the archaeological features recovered that day that this effort produced substantive indications for (n) the location of the original southern perimeter defensive curtain, palisade, or stockade wall, (o) the southern and northern decomposed granite and timber footings and correlated middens, and thereby the original configuration, for the *jacal* warehouse and first or interim Chapel of 1770 erected at that location; and ultimately, tentative indications for (p) the remains of the extensive platform that once served as the pediment or base for the bell wall or *campanario* noted by Captain Pedro Fages as having once adjoined the Serra Chapel of 1772.⁸

A significant and extensive body of Spanish colonial era material culture (and faunal and floral specimens; see Lucido, 2013, this volume) was recovered, and architectural features exposed and identified, as the result of those trenching and corollary monitoring operations undertaken during the summer of 2007. Given the need to deploy and install an extensive system of French drains, and both fire suppression and related conduit, some fourteen 22' to 24' foot long and 18" wide trenches were excavated to bedrock immediately adjoining the perimeter walls of the Royal Presidio Chapel, and an additional seventeen 22' to 24' foot long trenches were extended both east and northeast of the chapel so as to connect the aforementioned systems to existing utility areas buried beneath Church

Street, for a total of thirty-one trench spans overall. As a result, a sizeable collection of Mission or Spanish Colonial (ca. 1770-1821), Mexican (ca. 1821-1848), and early American (ca. 1848-1865) earthenware vessels and shards numbering into the thousands, and copper, iron, and bronze hardware, nails, and ornaments, gunflints, projectile points, shell and bone buttons, window and bottle glass, saddlery and horseshoes, and a broad array of other items of material culture were recovered and catalogued (May 1972, 1974).⁹ Where faunal and marine specimens are concerned, trenching operations produced significant indications of an early reliance on marine resources as evinced by way of trenching operations in the area immediately behind the former south wall of the Serra Chapel of 1772, and presently identified with the threshold area of the San Carlos Cathedral, or Royal Presidio Chapel of 1794. The massive Terrace 1 feature identified with the original south wall of the Chapel of 1794 in turn produced a sizeable midden that very likely constituted the post-1794 trash midden associated with activities correlated with the completion of the Chapel of 1794. In this latter midden, the recovery of earthenware shards, specifically *majolica* tin-glazed ceramics and *Galera* and *Tlaquepaque* wares, dated this deposit to the period of circa 1807, and its contents was dominated by Mission-styled plain wares of a type used in storage and cooking vessels (see Figure 10), as well as an extensive deposit of cattle bone that comprised the diet of this

Figure 10. An assortment of *Majolica* and earthenware recovered at the Royal Presidio Chapel in the period extending from 2006 through 2007. A particularly large sampling of earthenware was recovered during the course of the Royal Presidio Chapel Project, and some 800 specimens are presently being subjected to a dispersive X-ray fluorescence (EDXRF) study by CSU Long Beach graduate student Amy Stine. Photos © Rubén G. Mendoza, 2006.



latter period (Lucido 2013; see this volume). When contrasted with the marine emphasis of those trash middens identified with the earlier Chapel of 1772, the middens of the Chapel of 1794 make clear the transition to a ranching economy dominated by the consumption of beef and other domesticated and wild resources.

Historic Illustrations

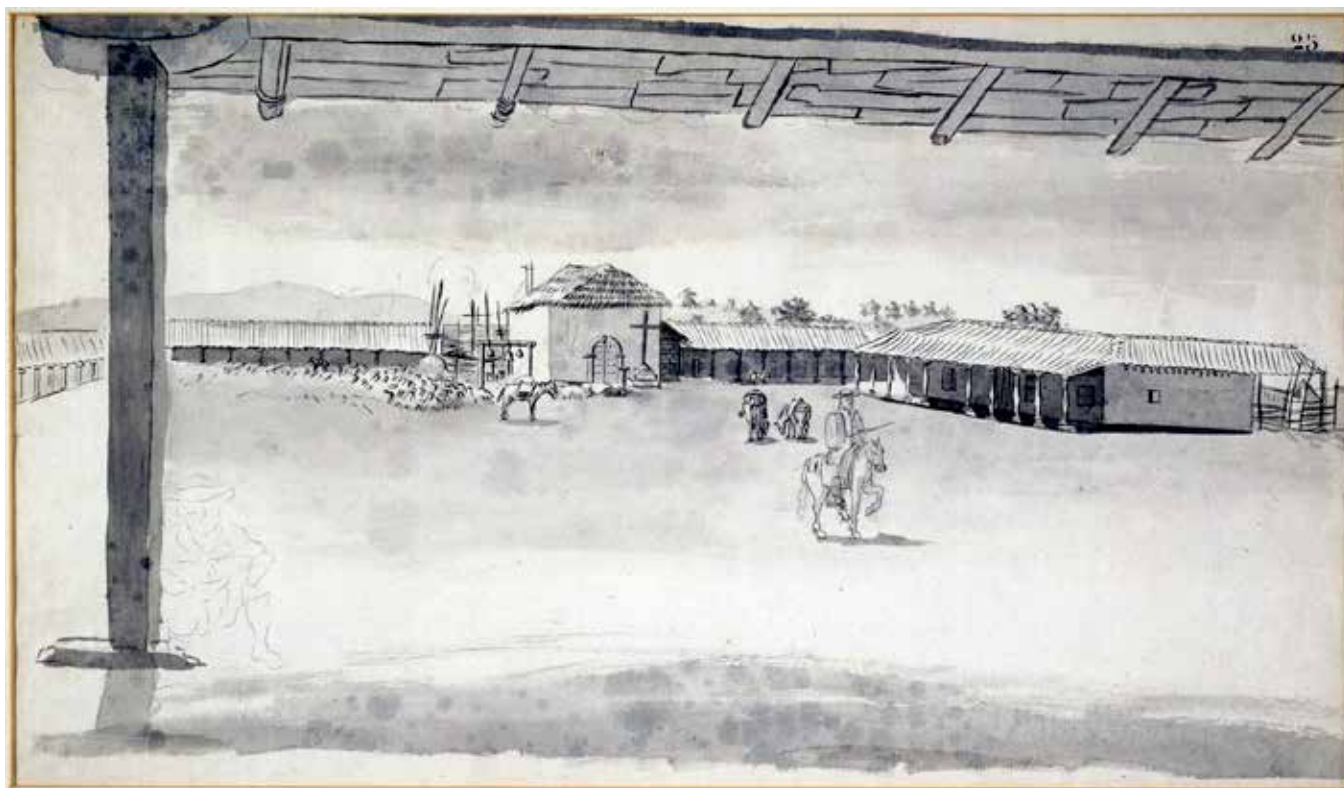
The historical archaeology in this instance was significantly aided and abetted by the treasure trove of primary source documents, and in particular, historic illustrations available for the completion of this research. Perhaps the two most critical such resources for ascertaining the construction sequence or architectural history identified very specifically with the construction of the Chapel of 1794 are those identified with the late 18th and early 19th century illustrations of José Cardero and Richard Brydges Beechey, respectively. The significance of the illustrations prepared by each of these individuals merits much further consideration than can be afforded in this context (Van Nostrand 1968).

Evidence derived from the observations of the artists and scientists of the Malaspina-Bustamante Expedition of 1789-94 has long provided a visual reference to the architectural characteristics of the site of the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey* as it appeared in 1791-92. It is to the credit of the 25-year-old José Cardero that the impeccable “scientific” illustrations that he produced at that time in his life continue to play a key role in the interpretation of the history of science, and the science of history, in New Spain and the Americas more generally. Because Cardero rendered his sketches of Monterey as a result of two landfalls at Monterey – the first from Alessandro Malaspina’s corvette, the *Descubierta*, and subsequently, aboard the *goleta* (or topsail schooner/brig) *Mexicana* with Cayetano Valdés y Flores – questions remain as to whether the sketches were produced on the first and or second landfalls at Monterey.

Despite the many questions that remain, Cardero’s invaluable 1791-92 sketches depict two distinct views of the Chapel of 1772. The first, and perhaps the most famous, *Vista del Presidio de Monte Rey*, depicts the whole of the *presidio* compound as viewed from the south, with the vessels *Descubierta* and *Atrevida* in the harbor (see Figure 2, above). A third ship, the *goleta Santa Saturnina*, arrived on 16 September of 1791, and joined the ships of the Malaspina Expedition at that time (Cutter 1960: 18). The second key Cardero illustration depicting the *presidio* presents a perspective looking south across the *presidio*’s *Plaza de Armas* (Plaza of Arms) toward the main façade of the thatched-roof Chapel of 1772 (see Figure 11, below). By that time, Cardero’s sketches depicted an already considerably altered 20-year old adobe sans the massive bell wall and tower that had been reduced to rubble shortly before the rendering of Cardero’s illustration of 1791-92.¹⁰

In the *Plaza de Armas* sketch, titled *Plaza del Presidio de Monte Rey*, Cardero depicts the Padre's Quarters of 1778, and attached timber *galería* or arcade, with scaffolding for the Chapel of 1794 rising from the background. Recent findings pertaining to the *Plaza de Armas* sketch confirm that that scaffolding tethered to the north and east walls of the under-construction rendering of the Chapel of 1794 served to facilitate the construction of the *espadaña* or bell wall and tower as per that progress made to 1791. The *Plaza de Armas* sketch also depicts the sacristy of the Chapel of 1772 – to the west or right of the chapel -- thought to have been added as a lean-to structure after 1778. Not only have recent discoveries confirmed the precise location of the granite boulder and shale block foundation footings of the Chapel of 1772, and the Sacristy of 1778 depicted in the Cardero sketch, archaeology in this instance has in turn served to validate the precision with which Cardero rendered his subjects.

Richard Brydges Beechey (1808 - 1895) served as a midshipman on *H.M.S Blossom* under the command of his brother, Captain Frederick William



Beechey (Beechey 1832). During the years 1825 through 1828, *Blossom* voyaged to the Pacific and Bering Strait as part of a British polar expedition to determine the navigational prospects of the north-west passage to the Pacific (Beechey 1832). Beechey and admiral mate William Smyth also served as artists for the expedition during which they illustrated and documented the voyage in its entirety (Beechey 1832). The *Blossom* made landfall at Monterey after departing San Francisco in 1827. During his

Figure 11. Cardero's sketch of the Chapel of 1772 as seen from the perspective of a northeast to south-southwest view across the *Plaza de Armas* in circa 1791-92. Document courtesy the Archives of the Diocese of Monterey.

sojourn in Monterey, Captain Frederick William Beechey and his crew visited Mission San Carlos Borromeo and the Royal Presidio of Monterey (Beechey 1832). At that time, Captain Beechey noted that although the condition of the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey* was more stable than that of the *Real Presidio de San Francisco*, particularly insofar as its role as a key defensive fortification, the perimeter defensive curtain of the Royal Presidio of Monterey was nevertheless rendered inadequate as a result of the attack on Monterey by the Argentinean privateer Hippolyte de Bouchard in 1818. While in Monterey, Beechey produced a particularly detailed watercolor and pencil illustration of the Royal Presidio of Monterey under the Mexican flag. The *H.M.S. Blossom* is depicted to the far right, while the Presidio quadrangle is depicted with a ruined eastern perimeter defensive curtain or adobe wall (see Figure 12, below). Significantly, many of those architectural features ultimately identified archaeologically or interpreted by way of other primary source documents are necessarily corroborated by way of those period illustrations rendered by Beechey.

Figure 12, (below). View west toward the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey* from the vantage point of *El Estero* as seen and illustrated by Richard Brydges Beechey, circa 1826-27. Note east barracks range building and ruins of the east perimeter defensive curtain of the *Presidio* quadrangle in foreground, and west adobe end-wall of the Padre's Quarters on this, the east side, of the Royal Presidio Chapel of 1794. Illustration courtesy the Bancroft Library, Berkeley, California.

Identifying the Earliest Chapel



I have cautiously ventured references in this instance to the 1st through 3rd chapels of the Royal Presidio of Monterey, with the first dated to 1770, the second to 1772, and the third and final to 1794. I should note that this has been done so as to address what I am now convinced constitutes confusion, and at the very least, a misinterpretation of the social and architectural history of the Royal Presidio Chapel – Structures 1 through 3. The San Carlos Cathedral, identified herein as the Chapel of 1794, has long been thought to constitute the 4th chapel identified with the presidio compound. Recent findings from both the archaeology and history of the site now presuppose

that the Chapel of 1772 was actually the 2nd chapel, and as such originally intended to accommodate the church or sanctuary for the mission of *San Carlos de Monterey*, whose construction was initiated while Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, and Fray Juan Crespí, OFM, were in residence at Monterey (1770-72). The earliest chapel of the Royal Presidio of Monterey, however, was that of the *jacalon* or pole, mud, and thatch structure erected in 1770 (see Figure 13).



Figure 13. The construction of a *jacalon* or pole-and-thatch structure was recently undertaken as part of an ongoing restoration and public education effort by the Mission Conservation Program of San Juan Bautista. The structure in question provides an approximation of what one might imagine for some of the earliest structures once located at the Royal Presidio of Monterey. In this instance, construction required the preparation of rawhide straps for use as ties for binding together those poles forming both the perimeter walls and roof of the structure. The effort was directed by program docent and blacksmith John Grafton with the assistance of a host of CSU Monterey Bay student interns. Photo © Rubén G. Mendoza, 2013.

Significantly, much of that confusion inherent in attempting to identify the earliest chapel erected within the confines of the presidio proper stems from engineer Miguel Costansó's plan for the site circulated in 1770 (*Archivo General de las Indias*, 1770, Map No. 529; cf. Howard 1978a: 17). In what Howard (1978a: 17) refers to as a "stylized version of the Costanzo [*sic*] original" housed at La Casa Lonja, Seville, Spain, and reprinted by him in tandem with what he deems "a copy of what is believed to be the original... plan," the only indication for a chapel is that identified with the letter "A" depicted in the plan at the southwest corner of the presidio compound in a structure located immediately north of the ravelin in that corner of the complex. In the "stylized version" of Costansó's *Plano del Real Presidio de Sn. Carlos de Monterey* dated to 1770, the diminutive early *Presidio* structure identified with the letter "A" is referred to in the *Explicacion* or map legend of the plan as the *Yglesia actual*, or "current" church. Said map plan, based on a stylized version of the Costansó original, constitutes the principal source of much of that confusion inherent in attempting to identify the earliest building chronology specific to the evolution of church architecture contained within the presidio proper. Given the provisional and conjectural nature of Costansó's early plan, which clearly anticipated much of what would subsequently be erected in the way of perimeter defensive features

and range buildings identified with the presidio complex, I contend that the chapel, church or *Yglesia* noted in the Costansó plan was in turn conjectural, or at the very least, a short term or interim accommodation. The contention that the site of the Chapel of 1770 was misrepresented in the original *plano* is lent further credence when one considers that on 3 July of 1770 Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, in a letter penned to José de Gálvez, acknowledges that his only accommodations at that time were aboard *El Principe*, anchored in the Monterey Bay; or more specifically, “I who slept aboard the *El Principe*, not having yet a place of shelter ashore, for only the warehouse of the Presidio was being constructed” (cf., Howard 1978a: 18). Howard (1978a: 18) ultimately acknowledges that the presidio plat map sent by Captain Pedro Fages to Viceroy Carlos Francisco de Croix on 20 June 1771, “was a tentative plan, and may not represent exact locations of structures in 1771.”

One last consideration regarding the history of church architecture identified with the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey* concerns the putative original site of the first Serra mass conducted at that Monterey site identified with the original location of the Vizcaino or Serra Oak; which was in turn thought to constitute the site of that first mass convened at that same site by the chaplain who accompanied Sebastián Vizcaíno to Monterey in 1602. Given the ephemeral (and non-architectural) nature of that locality identified to date with the original Serra mass, I exclude this provisional site from consideration within the context of the architectural history of the presidio complex proper.

I hereby contend, therefore, that the only bonafide remains of the Chapel of 1770 are those archaeologically-recovered decomposed granite and charred (palisade) posthole footings exposed during the course of trenching operations undertaken in August of 2008. The archaeological feature in question, built as it was as part of a tandem Missionary’s Quarters, warehouse or *almacen*, and *Yglesia* or church, was conjoined with the southern perimeter defensive curtain or palisade of the *presidio*, and was thereby blessed by Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, on 14 June of 1770. According to Culleton (1950: 42), because of the particularly windy and inclement weather that befell the expedition on the feast day of *Corpus Christi* on that day in 1770, the sailors of the expedition “made a canopy under the warehouse roof with the flags of the various nations” because the “chapel was not finished.”¹¹ It was from this first, and provisional, sanctuary that both Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, and Fray Juan Crespi, OFM, ministered to the soldiers and civilians of the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey* between 1770 and 1772 (Geiger 1969).

The Serra Chapels

Scholarly conjecture and local lore has long grappled with a clearly problematized architectural history for the Royal Presidio of Monterey.

As noted in the foregoing discussion, until a recent reconsideration of findings from the archaeology and primary source documents deemed otherwise, it has long been assumed that two earlier *presidio* chapels were located at Monterey, and that the Chapel of 1772 was the third of four such chapels; and the second of four to be constructed with substantive materials consisting of granite rock footings, adobe walls, and lime stucco surfaces. The Chapel of 1770 has since been determined to have consisted of an *enramada* or pole-and-thatch lean-to, which made use of the *palisada* (or southern defensive curtain or palisade of 1770) to anchor, and thereby comprise its south wall. This latter observation further serves to confirm that the Serra Chapel of 1770 was in fact built “within” the confines of the original palisade erected as the perimeter defensive curtain or wall of the Royal Presidio of Monterey; again, a long standing point of contention for those who continue to argue that Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, constructed the Missionary’s Quarters and first Chapel of 1770 beyond or outside of the confines of the original compound measuring some 150 x 150 feet in areal extent. Whether there once existed an earlier provisional chapel at the southwest corner of the complex remains open to question, it is clear that such conjecture is based largely on the *presidio plano* or project plan prepared by Spanish engineer Miguel Costansó in June of 1770; itself a plan that was never fully adopted for the actual build-out of the *presidio* compound (see Figure 14).

Ultimately, a site report prepared by Captain Pedro Fages describing the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey* in 1773 provides perhaps the most complete period description of the newly completed Chapel of 1772. According to Fages (1773; cf. Geiger 1967: 328):

In the wing of the *presidio* on the south side facing the base is an adobe church whose foundations are of stone set in mortar. These foundations extend two quarters¹² above the surface and are a *vara* and a half in width. Upon these foundations rise the [adobe] walls five fourths in thickness. The church is fifteen *varas* long, seven *varas* wide and seven *varas* high. Twenty hewn beams each a palm in width and ten *varas* in length have an overlay of cane and upon this rests the roof which is flat. This has a cover of lime. The roof has four spouts to carry off the rainwater.¹³

Fages (1773; cf. Geiger 1967: 328) goes on to describe an ancillary structure pertaining to the Chapel of 1772, mainly that of an adobe bell tower of

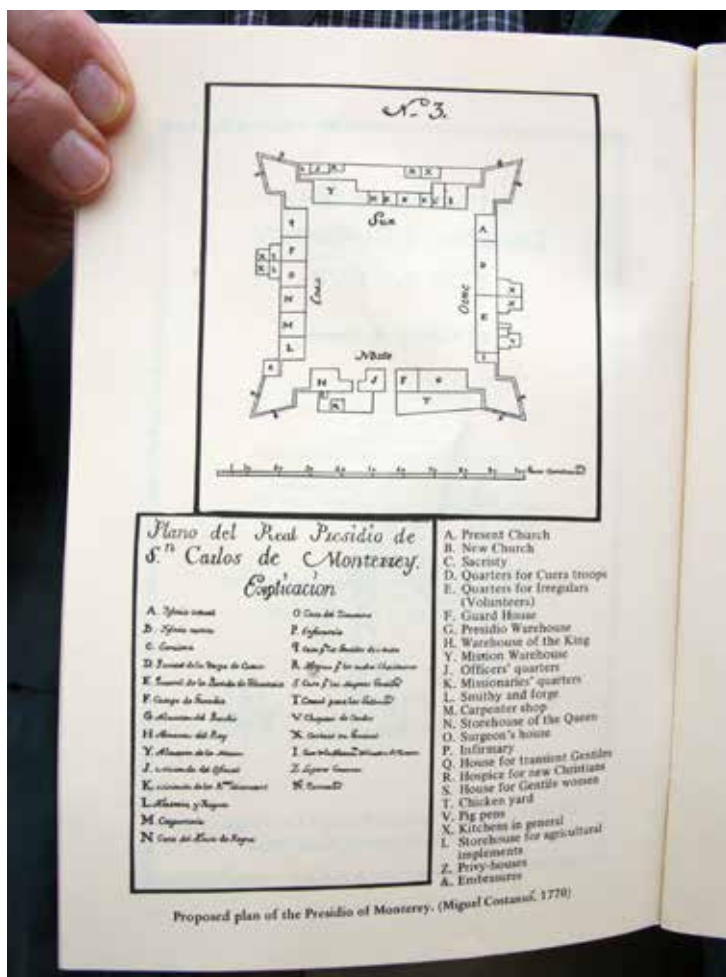


Figure 14. Spanish engineer Miguel Costansó’s “stylized” *plano* or map plan of the *presidio* published in 1770. Document courtesy the Archives of the Diocese of Monterey, and docents Kay and Jerry Horner of the Royal Presidio Chapel Museum. Photo by Rubén G. Mendoza, 2008.

sizeable dimensions, and one whose dismantling appears to have been documented mid-course in José Cardero's illustration of 1791. According to Fages (1773; cf. Geiger 1967: 328):

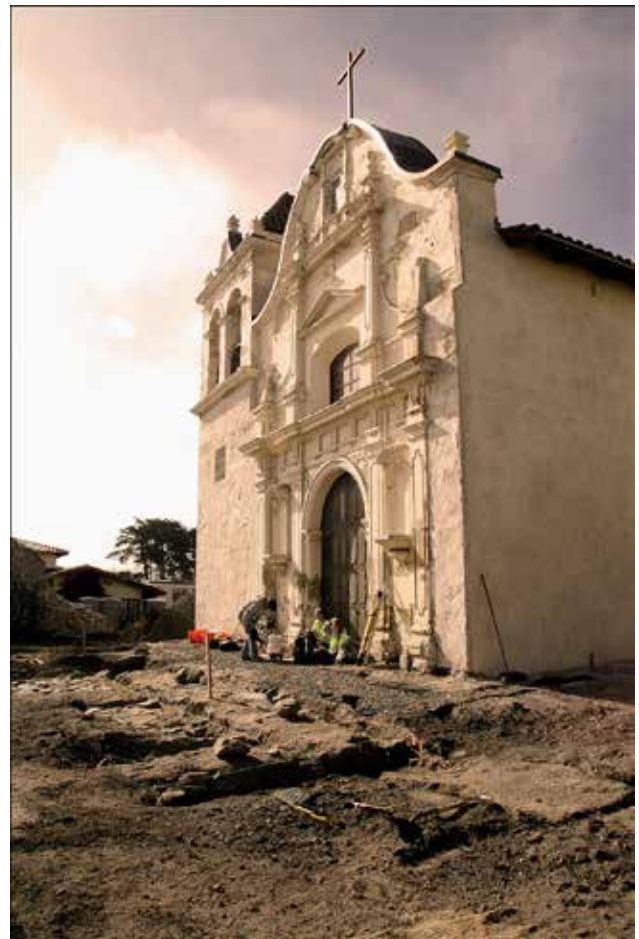
Joined to the right of the chapel is a tower¹⁴ six *varas* square also built of adobe. It is fifteen *varas* high and contains two terraces in ascending proportion in which to hang bells. The tower is surmounted by a cupola in the shape of a half orange and upon this rises an iron cross a *vara* and a half in height which also has a weather vane to show the direction of the wind. This tower has its foundation of stone mortared with lime and protrudes from the ground for three-fourths of a *vara*. The church and tower are plastered with lime within and without.

Fages account of 1773 thereby details the overall appearance and dimensions of the Chapel of 1772 by noting that its footprint measured some 7 *varas* in width by 15 *varas* in overall length, a fact that conforms with what was determined archaeologically during the 2008 recovery operations at the Royal Presidio of Monterey.¹⁵ Given those dimensions noted by Fages, which translate into English measure as 19.25 feet in width by 41.25 feet in length, one should anticipate that future (archaeological) investigations in that portion of the Church Street road-bed fronting the San Carlos Cathedral will assuredly result in the recovery of that portion of the Chapel of 1772 not investigated during the 2008 project effort (see Figure 15).¹⁶

Period of Construction

Archaeological findings from the area immediately north and west of the northwest corner of the San Carlos Cathedral reveal that the conjoined Missionary's Quarters, warehouse, and chapel consisted of little more than a *jacalon* or large pole, thatch, and mud structure some 11 to 15 feet in width.¹⁷ The archaeologically-defined structure so noted, I thereby contend, constitutes the original footprint of the Chapel of 1770 erected within the confines of the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey*. While the *enramada* -- or pole, branch, and brush provisional shelter erected at the Vizcaino (Serra) Oak on 3 June of 1770 -- may well constitute the first such Catholic religious "structure" on the Monterey Bay (see Figure 16, below); the massive wooden cross erected by the Portola Expedition and cited in Costansó's account of 1769 (see Figure 1, above), may well anticipate the claim in question if ephemeral or free-standing monuments are similarly taken into account. It is this latter *enramada* that I believe has led to so much confusion about the architectural history of the Royal Presidio of Monterey proper. Given the facts in question, I have come to conclude that only three chapels comprise

Figure 15. View to the southeast of the Serra Chapel of 1772, and Sacristy of 1778, excavation areas located within the immediate forecourt of the Chapel of 1794, or San Carlos Cathedral of Monterey, California. Photo © Rubén G. Mendoza, 2008.



the history of religious architecture at the Royal Presidio of Monterey, and that the San Carlos Cathedral in effect constitutes the 3rd chapel or *Yglesia* at that site.

Ultimately, the available evidence warrants the observation that the Chapel of 1772 constitutes the first “adobe” chapel on site, and the 2nd chapel erected within the *presidio* compound, after that originally conjoined to the Missionary’s Quarters in June of 1770. The first structure on site, it is clear, was only provisional, and made use of the newly installed southern perimeter palisade, or defensive curtain, identified archaeologically as constituting the south or rear wall of the Missionary’s Quarters of 1770. Interestingly, this pattern of integrating perimeter defensive curtains or walls into room-block configurations was subsequently repeated with the construction of both the Padre’s and Soldiers’ Quarters of 1778. The tandem recovery of the Missionary’s Quarters (*jacalon*) and Chapel of 1772 indicates that the latter structure was attached to the north wall of the former structure in a manner consonant with the orientation of the original palisade and barracks structures of the 1770, or earliest phase, of the site’s development (see Figure 17).

As previously noted, the Chapel of 1772 was first identified in a 20 June of 1771 plat map of the Royal Presidio of Monterey prepared by Captain Pedro Fages and sent to the viceroy of New Spain.¹⁸ In said document, Fages indicated the specific location of the Chapel of 1772, but left open to question the construction status of the sanctuary at that time. By August of 1771, Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, was apparently already accustomed to making reference to the Royal Presidio Chapel complex as the “old stand” in his assignment of Fray Crespí to continued religious duties at the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey*. Nevertheless, a later account by Fray Francisco Palóu, OFM, dated to December 1773 acknowledges that the Chapel of 1772 retained its original “flat and mud-covered” roof to that date. According to other early accounts, the Chapel of 1772 consisted of a flat *terrado*, or wood plank, earth, and lime plastered, roof and ceiling through 1776 when Fray Pedro Font, OFM, visited the site in that year and described the Chapel as such (Culleton 1950: 60).

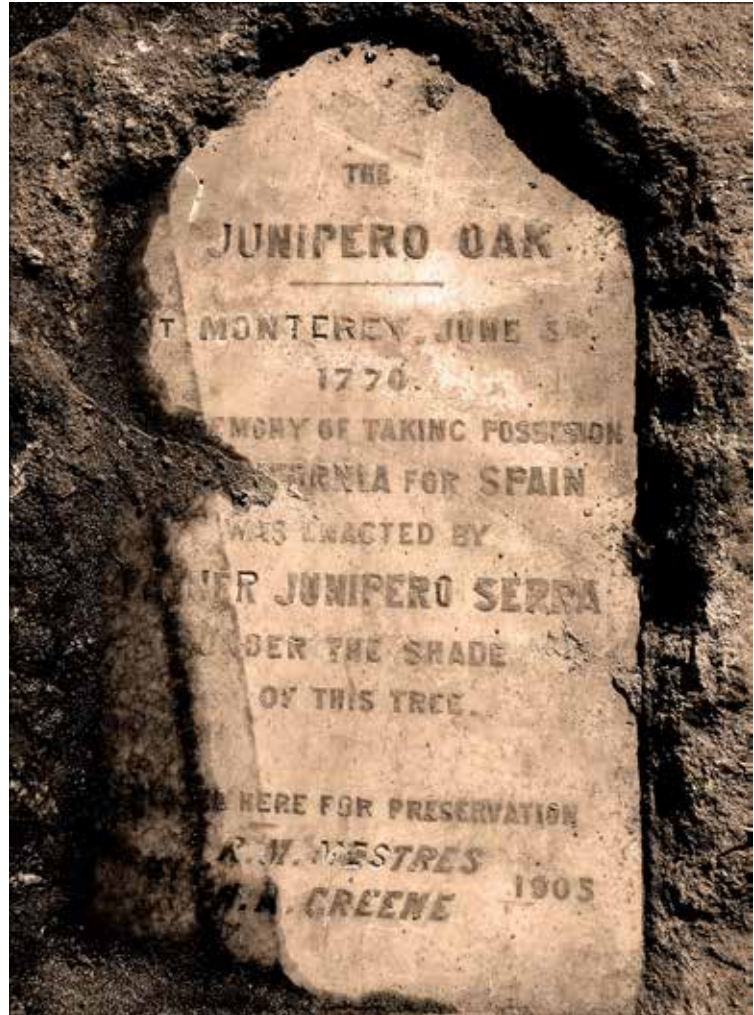


Figure 16. This marble marker commemorating the Junípero Oak as of 1905 was lost to the ages until recovered as a consequence of the Royal Presidio Conservation Project archaeology effort at the San Carlos Cathedral in 2007. Photo © Rubén G. Mendoza, 2007.



Figure 17. View of the archaeologically-exposed granite foundation footings, boulder pavements, and Roman mortar floorings of the Serra Chapel of 1772. The archaeology field crew, consisting of Gerald Jones, Esther Kenner, and Brenna Wheelis, respectively, are here pictured recovering the granite-boulder pavement of the Serra Chapel of 1772; the footprint of which is located within the forecourt of the San Carlos Cathedral. Photo © Rubén G. Mendoza, 2008.

These findings and observations thereby acknowledge that the Chapel of 1772 was not only the earliest adobe church in California, but also the first “mission” chapel on record in California; after the *enramada*, or temporary (and not particularly weatherproof) pole and thatch, structures installed at the putative site of the Vizcaino or Serra Oak, and at the Mission/Presidio sites of Monterey and San Diego de Alcalá, by Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, and his compatriots in 1769-70. Significantly, the Chapel of 1772 was consecrated as the *Capilla de San José*, after its spiritual patron, Saint Joseph, and not *San Carlos* -- a name adopted early in the American period so as to acknowledge the principal patron of the Mission district in question.

Assessing the Evidence

Given that evidence now available from the archaeology, I now conclude that much of that information reported to date (with respect to the existence of four chapels at the Royal Presidio of Monterey) is largely conjectural or misinformed.¹⁹ I contend, therefore, that consideration of the following observations and findings from the archaeology, and other primary source documents, are essential to assessing the fundamental identity and historic significance of the Chapel of 1772, particularly insofar as considerations regarding California’s earliest Christian missionary foundations are concerned. Current observations and findings indicate that (a) the Chapel of 1772 was in reality the 2nd chapel of the Royal Presidio of Monterey, which thereby supports the argument that the San Carlos Cathedral (aka: Chapel of 1794) was in effect the 3rd chapel erected on the same site; (b) the 2nd chapel, or *Capilla de San José*, thereby constitutes the first adobe “mission” chapel in *Alta California*, and its construction took place between 1771 and 1772; (c) the Chapel of 1772 was originally installed as a

“mission” chapel by Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, and Fray Juan Crespí, OFM, and was subsequently deactivated as a “mission” chapel, and then formally converted over to use as a *presidio* or military chapel in 1772; (d) Fray Serra and Fray Crespí ministered in the Chapel of 1772 until such time that Serra relocated the “mission” to the *Río Carmelo* and left Crespí to minister to the military and civilian population from the confines of the 2nd chapel in 1772; (e) During the 18-month sojourn of Serra and his compatriots at Monterey, the 1770 and 1772 chapel sites served as the spiritual headquarters for the missionaries of *Alta California*, and Fray Serra’s base of operations in particular, for a period of no less than six months to a year before the *padre* initiated transfer of the mission to *San Carlos Borroméo de Carmelo* in February-March of 1772; (f) the first solemn high mass (*Corpus Christi*) at Monterey was celebrated on 30 May 1771, and may well have been celebrated in the shadows of the as yet unfinished Chapel of 1772 by Fray Serra during landfall of the frigate *San Antonio* in that year; (g) on or about 1 August of 1771 Fray Serra assigned Fray Crespí to maintain and minister at the “old stand,” specifically identified by Fray Serra with the Monterey chapels of 1770 and 1772, while he (Serra) launched the founding of *San Carlos Borroméo de Carmelo*; (h) sometime after February or March of 1772 Fray Crespí transferred the last of the “mission’s” goods and furnishings to San Carlos Borroméo, and assigned Friars Domingo Juncosa (1740-?) and José Cavaller (1740-1789) -- both of the archdiocese of Tarragona, Catalonia, Spain -- to minister as the “first priests” or *presidio* chaplains in care of the Chapel of 1772 at Monterey;²⁰ and finally, (i) the abandoned “mission” house of worship (or Chapel of 1772) thereby became the first *presidio* chapel to serve the spiritual needs of the military and civilian populations of Monterey in its guise as the *Capilla de San José*, now the site of the San Carlos Cathedral.

Historic Site Significance

When construed solely in terms of a specific venue that served as host to events of paramount historical significance, the Serra chapels of Monterey are of clearly central importance to the documentation of the earliest evangelical efforts by the Order of Friars Minor in *Alta California*. Given their status as the earliest Catholic, and thereby Christian, houses of worship yet identified archaeologically in the former province of Alta California; not to mention their status as church structures specifically identified with the ministry and industry of the Blessed Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, and Fray Juan Crespí, OFM; the respective significance of the Serra chapels of Monterey is without contest. One need only consider but a few of those events that framed the spiritual, political, and cultural life of the chapels in question to define the import of their role as significant regional landmarks (see Figure 18, below). Significantly, on Sunday, 11 March, 1776, the legendary expeditionary commander Captain Juan Bautista de Anza

Bezerra Nieto (1736-1788) entered the following acknowledgement in his personal diary regarding that mass convened within the Chapel of 1772 at the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey*:

The reverend father president of the missions of these new establishments came with three other friars from the mission of Carmelo, which is a league distant, to welcome me and to invite me to go to the mission. With their aid we had the advantage of Mass and a sermon, given by our father chaplain, Fray Pedro Font, as an act of thanksgiving for the successful arrival of the expedition at this [Monterey] presidio. With great energy he exhorted our people to manifest their Catholicism by their exemplary lives, as a mirror which the piety of his Majesty is sending to these regions to convert its heathen, this being the principal purpose for which they have been brought.

In addition to its pivotal role as the mission and presidio chapel of *San Carlos de Monterey*, the Chapel of 1772 saw use as the principal venue for some of the great and momentous firsts in the history of California and the West. In addition, the Chapel of 1772 served as the sanctuary within which the friars administered the sacrament of “exploration” to Captain Juan Bautista de Anza’s intrepid and stalwart party of expeditionaries who went on to identify and chart the *Bajía de San Francisco* in 1776. The chapels of 1770 and 1772 similarly constitute the hallowed grounds where both the first Christian baptism of a Native Californian took place on 26 December of 1770 in the guise of Bernardino de Jesús Fages (Culleton 1950: 46), and where the first California (Christian) *pobladores* were buried in hallowed (church) grounds as early as 26 July 1770 when the first such *campo santo* or cemetery was blessed in *Alta California*. Significantly, the chronicles of Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, acknowledge that the first Christian burial in Alta California took place at the foot of the cross planted by the soldiers of the Serra-Portolà Expedition at the Vizcaino (Serra) Oak of Monterey, where Alexo Niño was buried on 3 June of 1770. Subsequent burials at the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey* were those already noted to have taken place on 26 July of 1770. Interestingly, the second of the *pobladores* or Hispanic Catholic colonists to die at Monterey was an African American crewman by the name of Ignacio Ramírez.²¹ Four others soon followed, and were buried in rapid succession in the *presidio* cemetery identified with the Chapel of 1770 first blessed on 26 July of that year. Ultimately, while many other “firsts” for the history of California have yet to be fully elucidated, the greater historical significance of the chapels of 1770 and 1772 may well continue to be gauged primarily in terms of their having been constructed and consecrated under the direction of Fray Junípero Serra, OFM. As such, their pivotal roles in the founding of the westernmost outpost of the Spanish empire is incontrovertible.

Concluding Remarks

In the final analysis, it is clear that recent studies from the archaeology of the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey* now pose many more questions than can possibly be addressed at this time. Contrary to prevailing views that hold that the original Missionary's Quarters, and Fray Junípero Serra's Chapels of 1770 and 1772, were located outside the *presidio* compound, this study has produced a substantive body of evidence and new revelations that confirm that the Blessed Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, and his compatriots were housed within, and not beyond, the walls of the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey* in the period from 1770 through 1772.

Significantly, during the trenching operations of the summer of 2007, substantive fragments of a carved slate block of stone, and an elevated platform comprised of finely dressed shale-block were in turn identified just beneath the northwest corner of the San Carlos Cathedral. The features in question are now thought to represent the remains of the masonry altar platform of the Serra Chapel of 1770, and may well constitute all that remains of the sanctuary area of the earliest Christian house of worship on the Pacific Coast of *Alta California*. In the final analysis, on the very day in 2008 that I was tasked with seeing through the reburial of the foundation footings and Roman mortar pavements of the Chapel of 1772, I discretely positioned myself over what would have constituted the *sancta sanctorum*, or altar, of the Serra Chapel of 1772 and dropped to my knees and made the sign of the Cross; and in that way paid tribute to the many ancestors, and centuries of sacrifice, that lay in the sandy loamy deposits of this most sacred place – a fact that continues to strike a scholarly chord, and at the same time, give spiritual pause to this descendant of the earliest Hispanic Catholic *pobladores* of California and the West.



Figure 18. On 3 June of 2009 Bishop Richard Garcia of the Diocese of Monterey reopened and rededicated the San Carlos Cathedral some 239 years after the founding of the *Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey*, and 215 years after the construction of the chapel of 1794. In this photo, the Bishop and the processional party stand atop the paved forecourt that overlies the Serra Chapel of 1772. Photo © Rubén G. Mendoza, 2009.

Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Very Reverend Peter A. Crivello, V.G., Pastor the San Carlos Cathedral, and Cathy Leiker, Project Manager of the Royal Presidio Chapel Conservation Project, for recruiting such a stellar team of consultants, contractors, and specialists to this effort. I in turn wish to thank former Bishop Sylvester Ryan, and the Most Reverend Richard J. Garcia, D.D. Bishop of Monterey, for their past and present support for my work on behalf of the Diocese of Monterey. Sir Richard Joseph Menn was most generous in fielding so many questions about the history of the Catholic heritage of the Monterey Bay for both my students and me. I thank Father Carl Faria, Archivist of the Diocese of Monterey, for his gracious and very generous assistance with archival resources and other leads regarding this research. Ultimately, the lion's share of the credit for those findings reported here go to those lab and field crews that proved indispensable, and indefatigable, in their efforts to keep pace with the process of discovery over the course of the Royal Presidio Chapel Conservation Project effort spanning the fall of 2006 through the fall of 2008. The members of the fall 2006 and summer 2007 lab and field crews consisted most notably of Adrian Lopez, Gerald Jones, Cori Finley, Gina Michaels, Shari Harder, Adam Harris, and Genetta Butler, among others; whereas Esther Kenner, Brenna Wheelis, Ellen Albertoni, Gerald Jones, and Cristina Verdugo saw through the summer 2008 mitigation efforts pertaining to the Serra chapels. In addition to the aforementioned California State University, Monterey Bay, Institute for Archaeology students cited in this report, I hereby acknowledge Ms. Jennifer A. Lucido of the Sonoma State University Cultural Resources Management Program for her tireless and devoted long-term efforts and truly invaluable assistance with pertinent research and other editorial assistance and transcription services required for the successful completion of this latest study, and the 2012 cultural resources assessment that anticipated this latest undertaking. Last, but not least, I gratefully acknowledge my devoted wife Linda Marie Mendoza, and my loving and very understanding daughters, Maya Nicole, and Natalie Dawn Marie Mendoza, whose ongoing support makes this work possible.

Endnotes

1. *Antes de dexar esta ensenada erigimos una cruz sobre la plaia con un letrero gravado en la propia madera que decía: escarba: al pié hallarás un escrito. Este era el que insertamos aquí copiado al pié de la letra (Costansó, Sunday, December 10, 1769, cf. Web de Anza. Available at <http://anza.uoregon.edu/Action.lasso?-database=c69sp&-layout=standard&-op=eq&-date=12/10/1769&-response=format/c69sppg2fmt.html&-maxrecords=1000&-noResulterror=anzaweb/sorry.html&-search>)*

La expedicion de tierra que salió de San Diego el día 14 de Julio de 1769 años á las ordenes del Governador de Californias don Gaspar de Portolá, entró en la Canal de Santa Barbara el día nueve de Agosto: pasó la Punta de la Concepcion el día veinte y siete del mismo: llegó al pié de la Sierra de Santa Lucía el día treze de Septiembre: entró en la sierra dicha el diez y siete del proprio mes: acabó de pasar la sierra ó de descabezarla del todo el día primero de Octubre; y avistó el proprio día la Punta de Pinos: el siete del mismo, reconocida ya la Punta de Pinos, y las ensenadas a la banda del norte, y sur de ella, sin ver señas del Puerto de Monterrey, resolvió pasar adelante en busca de él: a treinta de Octubre dió vista a la Punta de los Reyes, y farallones del Puerto de San Francisco en numero de siete. Quiso llegar a la Punta de los Reies la expedicion; pero unos esteros inmensos, que [Mse] internan extraordinariamente en la tierra, y le precisaban a dar un rodeo sumamente grande, y otras dificultades (siendo la maior la falta de viveres) la precisaron á tomar la buelta, creyendo que el Puerto de Monterrey podría tal vez, hallarse dentro de la Sierra de Santa Lucía; y temiendose haver pasado sin haverlo visto: dió la buelta desde lo ultimo del Estero de San Francisco en onze de Noviembre. Pasó por la Punta de Año Nuevo el diez y nueve del dicho; y llegó otra vez á esta Punta y Ensenada de Pinos en veinte y siete del mismo: desde dicho día hasta el presente nueve de Diziembre practicó la diligencia de buscar el Puerto de Monterrey dentro de la cerranía, costeandola por la mar a pesar de su aspereza, pero en vano: por ultimo desengañada ya, y desesperando encontrarlo despues de tantas dilixencias, afánes y trabajos, sin mas viveres que catorze costales de arina, sale hoi de esta ensenada para San Diego. Pide a Dios todopoderoso la guie, y a ti navegante quiera llevarte su Divina Providencia a puerto de salvamento. En esta Ensenada de Pinos a nueve de Diziembre de mil setecientos sesenta y nueve años.

Nota: El ingeniero don Miguel Costanso observó la latitud de varios parages de la costa siendo los principales los siguientes. San Diego en el real que ocupó en tierra la expedicion 32° 42 El pueblo de gentiles mas oriental en la Canal de Santa Barbara 34 18 La Punta de la Concepcion 34 30 El principio de la Sierra de Santa Lucía hacia el sur 35 45 Su fin en esta ensenada de la Punta de Pinos 36 36 La Punta de Año Nuevo que es baja y de arrecifes de Piedra 37 04 En tierra cerca del Puerto de San Francisco teniendo los farallones al oeste quarta al noroeste 37 35 Juzgo la Punta de los Reies que miraba al oesnoroeste desde el mismo sitio por 37 44

Se les suplica a los señores comandantes de los pacabotes, ya sea de San Joseph, ó del Principe que si a pocos días despues de la fecha de este escrito abordaren á esta plaia; enterados de su contenido y del triste estado de la expedicion procuren arrimarse a la costa y seguirla para San Diego a fin de que si la expedicion tuviese la dicha de avistar a una de las dos embarcaciones y les pudiese dar á entender con señas de banderas ó tiros de fusil el parage en que se halle la socorra con viveres si posible fuese.

Alabado sea Dios.

2. *Nos pusimos en marcha con el tiempo sereno y frio anduvimos legua y media, y campos del otro lado de la Punta de Pino caminamos una y media leguas Al Pinar 1 ½ leguas. De la Ensenada de Pinos 1 ½ leguas. (Costansó, Sunday, December 10, 1769,*

cf. Web de Anza. Available at <http://anza.uoregon.edu/Action.lasso?-database=c69sp&-layout=standard&-op=eq&date=12/10/1769&-response=format/c69spg2fmt.html&-maxrecords=1000&-noResulterror=anzaweb/sorry.html&-search>)

3. A chainsaw-wielding vandal recently desecrated this significant historical marker, and the State of California and the City of Monterey opted to permit the hate crime in question to stand unchallenged. The remains of the Portola Expedition cross were ultimately salvaged by concerned citizens and the cross has since been resurrected on the properties of the Diocese of Monterey.
4. Our use of the site name of *El Real Presidio de Monterey*, or more aptly, *El Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterrey*, is drawn quite specifically from period documents penned by Portolá, Fages, and Serra. Fray Junípero Serra in fact maintained the use of the name for his mission as *La Misión de San Carlos de Monterey* through the course of his life at the “new stand” at the mouth of the *Río Carmelo*.
5. The Chapel of 1794 is in turn depicted with wooden task walls and scaffolding in place, and cranes and pulley systems for hauling stone to the top of the walls at the south and north. The southern and eastern portions of the Presidio perimeter defensive curtains are clearly visible. In order to construct the new Chapel of 1794, it was necessary for the builders to construct a massive granite-boulder terrace extending beyond the southern perimeter defensive curtain. They were thereby able to extend the new Chapel to the edge of the escarpment overlooking the channel to the south by way of breaching the southern perimeter defensive curtain of 1778.
6. The conservation team consisted of Anthony Crosby (Architectural Conservator), Fred Webster (Engineer), John Griswold (Art Conservator), Brett Brenkwitz, Charles Franks, and Mike Beautz (Architects), Michael Tornabene (Art Conservator), and myself, Rubén G. Mendoza (Project Archaeologist), among a host of others. The construction crew was in turn supervised by Project Foreman Earl Baker (2007) and Lou Theilin (Devcon Construction). Project Engineer Lisa Fitz of Devcon provided meticulously detailed weekly reports of all contract-related activities pertaining to the retrofit and conservation efforts for the course of the project.
7. The provisional date ascribed to the diminutive adobe structure identified with the Sacristy of 1778 was based on the projected date for the construction of the new southern perimeter defensive curtain of 1778; which was modified soon thereafter into the makings of the south wall of the Padres’ Quarters of 1778. Given that the Chapel of 1770 originally served as an almacén or warehouse structure, soon thereafter converted over to use as a chapel, and then as a Missionary’s Quarters; the construction of the new Padres’ Quarters of 1778 would have precluded the necessity for maintaining the by then dilapidated former Chapel of 1770. I have come to conclude that in order to build the Padre’s Quarters of 1778, it would have been necessary to dismantle the eight-year-old conjoined Missionary’s Quarters, Warehouse, and retired First Chapel of 1770. Therefore, the loss of the attached former housing and storage areas would have necessitated the construction of a vestry or Sacristy where the devotional materials from the Chapel of 1772 might be housed. As such, the date of 1778 presents the earliest such date that the addition was likely added.

8. Interestingly, while Geiger (1967) interpreted Fages report to indicate that the bell wall and platform was situated to the “right” or east (of north) of the main entrance to the Chapel of 1772, those archaeological deposits recovered immediately to the west of the Chapel of 1772 indicate a significant buried structure at that location, whereas trenching operations to the east bore little to no evidence of such a structure. Cardero’s 1791 illustration, however, does appear to support the idea that the bell tower and its cupola were located immediately east of the chapel as noted.
9. The incredible diversity of ceramics, particularly Spanish and Mexican majolicas, recovered by this most recent undertaking at the Royal Presidio of Monterey will have a key role to play in future studies of ceramics and their production in early California (e.g., Williams and Cohen-Williams, 2003).
10. Interestingly, Cardero’s sketch of the Chapel from the perspective of the *Plaza de Armas* clearly shows a large pile of what appear to be *ladrillo* or fired-tile of the type that would have composed the *espadana* or bell wall portion of the tower in question. As such, I would contend that given the paucity of references to precisely when said tower was dismantled, it may well be that the Chapel of 1772 lost its tower during the initial phase of construction identified with the Chapel of 1791-95. The location of construction materials or debris as the case may be, may well serve to confirm Pedro Fages’ 1774 description of the tower and its location at the northeast corner of said Chapel.
11. See also Howard (1978a: 18) for reference to Fray Junípero Serra’s accounting of the unfinished condition of the Chapel of 1770 as of 14 June of that year.
12. A *cuarta* or ‘fourth’ is a measurement of eight and a fourth inches, a little larger than a palm (cf. Geiger 1967:335).
13. The church with the cross in the center of the plaza may be seen in one of the drawings made during the Malaspina visit in 1794. See Donald C. Cutter, *Malaspina in California* (San Francisco, 1960), opposite p. 18 (cf. Geiger 1967:335).
14. This tower is not shown in any of the drawings of the Malaspina visit. It probably fell and was not replaced (cf. Geiger 1967:335). The Geiger (1967) observation noted here apparently overlooked evidence inherent to the image which indicates that the remains of the tower and cupola may be seen immediately to the east or left-hand side of the Serra Chapel of 1772.
15. The Spanish colonial era unit of linear measure was the vara, which varied somewhat through time. In California, the vara approximates 0.33 inches. Therefore, the Chapel of 1772 was said by Fages to measure 19.25 feet in width by 41.25 feet in overall length. These measures in turn conform to those recently identified by way of my investigations for the discovery of the Mother Church or Capilla de 1797 from Old Mission San Juan Bautista, California. (Mendoza and Lucido 2013; Mendoza 2013).
16. I would strongly recommend the closure of Church Street so as to mitigate, and thereby minimize, the deleterious effects of automobile traffic transiting so close to the historic San Carlos Cathedral. To that end, some discussion has already been had with the City of Monterey about the prospects of transforming Church Street into the San Carlos Presidio Park.
17. See Mendoza and Cruz (1994) for further discussion regarding the role of *jacales*, *jacalon*, and other provisional pole and thatch structures in the set-

tlement of New Spain. Whereas the 11-foot measure defines the span of the interior room-block, the 15-foot measure encompasses both the room-block and walls of the structure so noted.

18. The Spanish general and viceroy of New Spain, Carlos Francisco de Croix, marqués de Croix, 1766-1771.
19. I should note that at the outset of this project, I too attempted to accommodate the available architectural histories into a framework that identified a 4th Chapel – that being the Chapel of 1791-95.
20. Cited from Maynard Geiger, O.F.M. *Franciscan Missionaries in Hispanic California, 1769-1848*. San Marino: The Huntington Library, 1969.
21. Ignacio Ramírez is documented to have succumbed while in the care of expedition surgeon Don Pedro Prat.

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