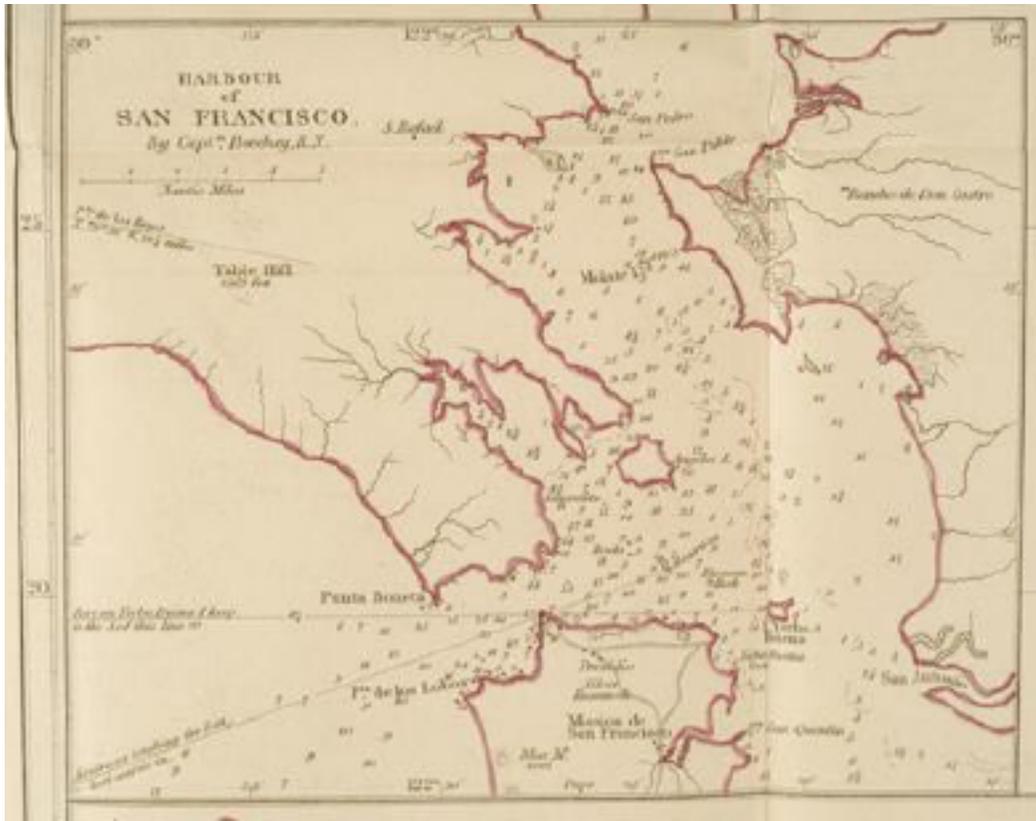


## Did You Know....?

By Clem Dougherty

...that the mission and **presidio of San Francisco de Asis** (sic) were established in the same year - **1776** - that our founding fathers were signing the Declaration of Independence on the east coast? Yes, it's true. In an earlier newsletter we left Father Junipero Serra, the first father president of the Missions, and Lieutenant Pedro Fages, the second military governor, in Carmel and Monterey respectively ready to begin the implementation of the mission / presidio program for California. But at higher levels of government in both Mexico and Spain, the attention turned further north to San Francisco Bay. Both Antonio de Bucareli, the new Viceroy in Mexico City, and Jose de Galvez, the new Minister of the Indies in Madrid, were keenly aware of the importance of the new-found San Francisco Bay and took action to eliminate any Russian or English threat to Spanish dominance of the Bay.



**Early Chart of San Francisco Bay**

The first action for the Spanish was to chart the entire Bay. Accordingly, the Spanish sent Lieutenant Juan Manuel de Ayala aboard the ship San Carlos to undertake that task. You may recall in a prior newsletter we stated that the mouth of San Francisco Bay had been discovered from the opposite Contra Costa / Alameda County Shore. Coming by ship from Baja California, Ayala then sent his pilot Jose de Canizares in a smaller boat ahead of him to locate the Bay. Canizares found the entrance and, on August 5, 1775, Canizares was the first European to sail through the entrance to the Bay. Ayala, aboard the San Carlos, followed the next day - August 6, 1775. Ayala and the San Carlos docked most of the time in what is now Ayala Cove on Angel Island. Ayala

accidentally had been shot in the foot as the result of a loaded pistol being packed away aboard the San Carlos. As a result he spent most of his time in Ayala Cove while Canizares, in the smaller boat, did the actual charting of the Bay. At this time the Bay was much larger than it is today not having suffered the terrible filling in by cities ringing the Bay as would later occur. It was Canizares who named **Angel Island** (Isla de Los Angeles), **Sausalito** (Saucelito – “little thicket of willows”), and **Alcatraz** (Isla de Alcatrazes – “island of pelicans”), a name Canizares first gave to Treasure Island but was later mistakenly transferred to the present day Rock by an English sea captain mapping the Bay in 1826. Once the charting was completed, Ayala, Canizares, and the San Carlos returned to Baja California.

The next action the Spanish took was something completely apart from the mission system. The Spanish sent Captain Juan Bautista de Anza and 240 people, including women and children, to settle San Francisco Bay as a bulwark against Russian or English expansion. De Anza’s party arrived in Monterey in March, 1776. Leaving the party at Monterey, De Anza rode up to present day San Francisco and in March of 1776 marked the site of the presidio at what is now Fort Point at the very entrance to the Bay (later moved more inland to where the presidio is located today). He then further marked the site of the mission some 3 miles inland at a small creek he named Laguna de Nuestra Senora de los Dolores (Our Lady of Sorrows) after which “Mission Dolores” was to become a second name for the mission. De Anza then returned to Monterey and then to Baja leaving Lieutenant Jose Moraga in charge of the colonists. Moraga and Serra then led the colonists up to San Francisco where on June 29, 1776, Mass was celebrated under a small shelter of branches on June 29, 1776, a date that marks the official founding of San Francisco. The Presidio de San Francisco de Asis was formally established on September 17, 1776, and Mission de San Francisco de Asis (also known as Mission Dolores) on October 9, 1776 -- the 1776 dates corresponding with the American Declaration of Independence being signed on July 4, 1776, on the east coast.

In time the Spanish and their Mexican successors would place 5 missions around the Bay: San Francisco de Asis, San Rafael, San Francisco de Solano (Sonoma), San Jose, and Santa Clara; two towns: San Jose and Sonoma; and one presidio - San Francisco de Asis. The Spanish and their Mexican successors were determined to lock the Bay into Spain and, later, into Mexico and not to let the Russians or English get their hands on it.

(Sources: Rawls and Bean: California , An Interpretive History, 9<sup>th</sup> ed.,pp. 40-43; Derek Hayes, Historical Atlas Of California, pp. 39-41; Rand Richards, Historic San Francisco, pp. 20-21;30)