

Bernardino Garcia

Born November 12, 1821 and baptized at Mission Santa Clara

- Bernardino Garcia was our 2nd Great-Uncle. We are direct descendants of his brother, Jose Miguel Garcia.
- All four of Bernardino and Jose Miguel's Grandparents were members of the Anza Expedition:
 - Jose Antonio Garcia (1733-1778) and Maria Petronilana Josefa de Acuna (1757-1783)
 - Ygnacio Soto (1749-1807) and Maria Barbara Espinosa (1752-1797)
- Both Grandfathers, as well as their father, Francisco Maria Leon Garcia, were soldiers.



Anza Expedition in 1775.
The soldiers of Anza's expedition were the founders and first settlers of the city of San Francisco

Other Garcia & Miranda ancestors among the 240 members of the Anza Colonizing Expedition on Monday, October 23, 1775:

Presidio Soldiers:

Corporal Domingo Alviso

Wife: Maria Angela Trejo

Jose Ramon Bojorques

Wife: Francisca Romero

Recruits:

Juan Salvio Pacheco

Wife: Maria Del Carmen Del Valle

Ignacio Maria Gutierrez

Wife: Ana Maria De Osuna

Pedro Antonio Bojorques

Wife: Maria Francisca De Lara

- In 1841 Bernardino enlisted in the SF Company at Sonoma at the age of 19
- Sonoma was the headquarters of the commandant of the Frontera del Norte - the Mexican provincial frontier of the north after General Vallejo was instructed to move his garrison there.



1841-1843 The names of the men composing the garrison of the San Francisco Presidio (Bancroft, History of California 1841-1845): Alferez Juan Prado Mesa, Sgt. Nazario Galindo, soldiers Jose Galindo, Antonio Bernal, Ramon Aguila, Francisco Cibrian, Blas Narvaez, Santiago Hernandez, Domingo Altamirano, Mariano Miranda, Santos Miranda, Jose Salazar, Geronimo Mesa, and Bernardino Garcia.

Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo is our 2nd Cousin 5x removed through the Lugos on his maternal side

- In 1845 Bernardino married Hilaria Carlota Sanchez Read, the widow of John Read who was the grantee of Rancho Corte de Madera
- Around this time, Bernardino earned an honest living in Sonoma (in-between stealing horses) as a straight-edged barber in Sonoma



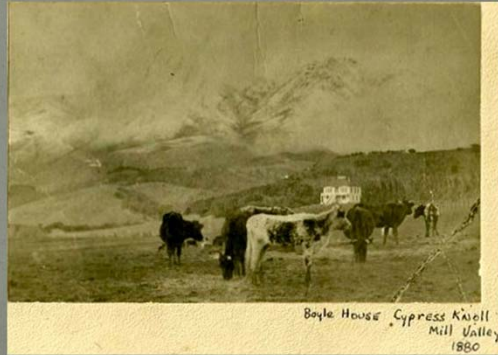
Hilaria and son, John Joseph Read

Rancho Corte Madera del Presidio, which encompassed what is now southern Corte Madera, Mill Valley, the Tiburon Peninsula, and Strawberry Point. It reached from Point Tiburon to Larkspur Creek, then known as Arroyo Holon.

- Bernardino and Hilaria had one child, a girl, named Carmelita Natividad Garcia in 1845
- Carmelita married Hugh Aloysius Boyle in 1865. Their home, known as Cypress Knoll, was in Mill Valley.



Carmelita at age 34



Boyle House Cypress Knoll
Mill Valley
1880

Bernardino and Hilaria reportedly had three children, but only one lived. Wonder where they found the time?

- In 1846, a handful of American settlers captured the Mexican garrison of Sonoma and raised a homemade flag proclaiming California an independent republic. Their actions were later called the "Bear Flag Revolt."



- Thomas Cowie & George Fowler, two of the American Bear Flaggers, were captured and killed near Santa Rosa by a band of Californios which included Bernardino Garcia, soon to be known as Three-Fingered Jack.
- Three Fingered Jack was a name of a popular play in New York in the 1820s and it became a popular nickname for any man missing a digit
- There are different stories of how Bernardino lost his finger:
 - Shot off during the Mexican War (most likely)
 - Bitten off during a fight
 - Severed while handling a lasso

Hilaria had her teenaged twin nephews, Ramon Valencia and Francisco de Haro (sons of the Alcalde of San Francisco) help run the ranch. The two unarmed boys and their elderly uncle, Don Juan Berryessa, were killed by Kit Carson (unprovoked, and on the orders of Capt. John Fremont). The murders were said to be in retaliation to the deaths of Cowie and Fowler.

After this incident, Hilaria fled with her children to Mission Dolores in San Francisco.

Fremont tried to lie his way out of his responsibility in the incident, but some years later, when he ran for Governor of California, he got very few votes in Northern California. His thoughtless act remained a bad blight on his reputation.

- According to General Vallejo's memoir, Bernardino Garcia was "the wickedest man California had produced up to that time" and he had been the terror of the Sonora Frontier for years.



The Blue Wing Inn in Sonoma, reportedly a hang-out of Three-Fingered Jack

- January 28, 1848 - The Discovery of Gold in California
- February 2, 1848 - The Treaty of Hidalgo ended the Mexican American war and California was ceded to the United States
- When the cry of gold went out thousands rushed in & the Californios found themselves in the minority & the newcomers considered the Californios to be foreigners. As competition for gold increased, resentment toward Californios and miners from other countries grew. In 1850 a Foreign Miners Tax Law forced them to pay \$20 a month to mine for gold.

- Many of the American 49ers began to take land from the Californios. They squatted on property or they violently took land, burning crops and chasing the Californios out of their homes.
- Others bilked the Californios who were often uneducated and who did not speak English. They also used the courts to make unfair claims on the Californios' property. Some Californios succeeded in keeping their land after fighting in the courts for years, but after running out of money, many Californios gave up and left.



Californio Rancho Wedding

- Bernardino was paroled at the end of the Mexican American War and during the Gold Rush he pursued a life of banditry and was a member of Salomon Pico's band.
- He had been well known among Californios for his battlefield prowess. Like so many, he took to stealing as a livelihood when there was no work for him as a soldier. The US military employed only Anglo American soldiers to garrison California's forts.
- For years he was one of the most feared bandits in California history robbing stagecoaches and travelers along the wild California roads.
- Later he became Joaquin Murietta's "Right Hand Man"

- Three Fingered Jack described:
 - “His countenance so fierce that few liked to look at it.”
 - Broad shouldered, bandy legged, with thick orangutan arms swinging almost to his knees and hands like “hickory cured hams”.
 - “He was an ungainly looking brute but as quick and agile as a panther. His head was massive and his black hair, coarse as a horse's mane, fell about his bull neck in tangled elf-locks; a heavy mustache as black as ink half-hid a thick-lipped, swinish mouth, his furtive black eyes glittered under rugged, beetling brows, and his swarthy face was pitted with small-pox scars and looked as if it might have been cut out of a rock with a dull chisel.
 - “A ‘hideous satyr’, wild, wayward, passionate and perhaps quite psychopathic.” Personally unclean, foul and brutal.



2. Joaquín Murrieta and Three-Fingered Jack in the style of Charles Nahl. Author's collection.

Drawing of Joaquin with Three-Fingered Jack

- “Nevertheless, Jack was well liked by all men save those he killed. When not on a business bent, he was filled with merry quips and was a very devil of a good fellow. He would weep at a sad story.”
- “The fortunate man whose throat he failed to cut was likely to find him a charming companion.”
- “For all his bloodthirsty ferocity, Three Fingered Jack was, as fiends go, about the most rollicking, jovial, carefree fiend that ever lived. He turned murder into a lark and committed the most diabolical crimes as if they were the merriest pranks in the world.”
- “The “When the bottle was passing he was the jolliest of comrades; he told stories, cracked jokes, the gusto of genuine enjoyment was in his deep-throated laughter. He was a very devil among the girls. At the fandangos, the prettiest señoritas made eyes at him from behind their fans and spread their most alluring wiles to take him captive.”

- There were plenty of cutthroats in the Gold Country but Joaquin Murrieta's group lived a life of robbery and murder that spanned the length and breadth of the Mother lode region of the Sierra Nevada Mountains.
- Virtually every community in the Sierra Foothills has one or more stories of Murrieta and Three-Fingered Jack during the three years from 1850-1853.
- Three-Fingered Jack was "utterly destitute of one merciful trait of humanity – he delighted in murder for its own diabolical sake and he gloated over the agonies of his unoffending victims."
- Three-Fingered Jack's influence grew and his brutal and bloodthirsty methods were soon employed in every robbery.

We are not going into grisly detail about Three-Fingered Jack's brutal methods because those particulars are not suitable for polite company. Suffice it to say, his and Murrieta's horrific exploits were most likely exaggerated and embellished a great deal by the popular "dime store" novelists of the day.

- July 27, 1853 – Three-Fingered Jack and Joaquin Murrieta were reportedly killed by Captain Henry Love's Rangers at Cantua Creek, south of Panoche Pass



- “It is said that the fleeing Jack Three-Fingers received eleven balls before his horse, his revolver and his strength failed him. It is said that cornered, like a grizzly bear he fought on with a bullet in his heart.”



California Historical Landmark 344 in Coalinga marks the approximate site of Joaquin’s headquarters, Arroyo de Cantua, where he and Bernardino were slain.

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- Love had Joaquin's head and Three-Fingered Jack's disfigured hand severed, packed in willow branches to keep them cool, wrapped them in a blanket and strapped the bundle to a horse.
- Upon arrival at Fort Miller, the head and hand were preserved in bottles of alcohol.
- In 1854 Captain Love took Joaquin's head and Jack's hand to gold rush towns for exhibition at the rate of \$1.00 per person.

**WILL BE
EXHIBITED
FOR ONE DAY ONLY!
AT THE STOCKTON HOUSE!
THE DAY, 1854. IN FRONT OF N. LUTER & C.**

**THE HEAD
OF the renowned Bandit!
JOAQUIN!
AND THE
HAND OF THREE FINGERED JACK!
THE FETTERED BANDIT & HIS MURDER.**

A "PAPER CUT" and "THREE-FINGERED JACK" were captured by the stock. The head and hand of Joaquin were sent to the Stockton House, N. Luter & Co. in 1854. The head and hand were preserved in bottles of alcohol. The head and hand were exhibited at the rate of \$1.00 per person. The head and hand were exhibited at the rate of \$1.00 per person. The head and hand were exhibited at the rate of \$1.00 per person.

- Joaquin Murrieta has been glorified as a “Robin Hood” and bandit hero to the Californios, but Three-Fingered Jack was known as blood-thirsty and cruel, a villain who cast his shadow on Joaquin.
- The presence of Three-Fingered Jack in the Joaquin band made the rangers who went after them look like the real good guys. Good must triumph over evil in legend.



J. Carrol Nash as Three-Fingered Jack in 'Robin Hood of El Dorado' (1936)



L.Q. Jones as Three-Fingered Jack in 'The Mask of Zorro' (1998)

“I will throw up my hands for no gringo dog”.
- Last words of Three-Fingered Jack