

from History of Brea - Orange Union  
High School District

by Harold W. Yates  
Aug 61

## Portola Monument

Gaspar de Portola - gov of Alta Calif from  
1767 to 1770

Don Gaspar de P. with sixty men  
camped here July 31, 1769, on his  
first exploring march from San Diego to  
Monterey. Dedicated June 2, 1932, by  
Grace Parlor No. 242, Native Daughters  
of the Golden West

"According to Mrs. Ted Craig, long-time  
resident of Brea, a very short ceremony  
preceded the unveiling of the monument  
with her husband then a state assemblyman  
from the district, giving the dedication  
before a sparse gathering of approx twenty-  
five persons

Need for shooting -

- ① picture of Ted Craig - in 1967 Jubilee Brea  
bottom
- ② pictures of Portola expedition



It all began over 200 years ago. Don Gaspar De Portola and his sixty Spanish soldiers became the first Europeans to reach the Brea area. His expedition was on the way from San Diego to Monterey Bay. Documents show that one night in July they camped at the mouth of Brea Canyon. Included in Don Gaspar's group was 26-year-old Corporal Jose Antonio Yorba, forty years later to become the first white settler in what is now Orange County.

History tells us that the day Portola's men arrived in the area which is now our county they were greeted by a great earthquake, that even frightened the native Indians. The day after the earthquake the little band of sixty men crossed the Santa Ana River - "with great difficulty on account of the swiftness of the current" - which shows that the area has changed somewhat since that long ago day in July 1769. It was the next night that the explorers walked through what is now Brea and camped at the mouth of Brea Canyon. A marker has been placed alongside Brea Canyon Road, at as near the exact spot as can be determined by documents.

The Indians, the first known humans who lived in the location we call home, were not admired by the members of the Portola expedition. They described the natives as a dirty, slovenly people who neither cultivated the ground, nor planted any kind of grain, but lived on the great abundance of game. Bows and arrows were the only implements that separated them from the Stone Age. A shortage of caves in this area left them living virtually in the open. The Spaniards observed that they lived in crude brushwood shelters. The men wore only animal pelts slung over their shoulders and the women wore a type of shirt made of rabbit skins. Children wore nothing.

ner Gabrielino  
County, howev-

estry, but none  
of the Orange  
melino language  
melino religion,  
still known and  
Juaneno (Lui-  
no language and

ity among some  
as. It is possible  
eno language is  
to pass it on to  
e, especially in  
apted to modern  
This degree of  
tolerant policies  
n versus the San  
had somewhat  
their identity as  
overnment and a  
higher education.  
st to the complex  
dly extinguished  
us of how much  
evidence can be  
analysis. For the  
rom manuscript  
Luiseno-Juaneno  
mmunity and of

dt 1922; Heizer 1978;  
1965-current; files of

## European Discovery

ESTHER RIDGWAY CRAMER



Although the California coast had been explored as early as 1542 by Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, it was not until 1769 that a land expedition was ordered by Don Jose de Galvez, Spanish Visitador-General. He had traveled to Lower California, where the Franciscan Order had recently replaced that of the Jesuits in order to reorganize the missions there and to plan the exploration and occupation of the land to the north. San Diego was named as the meeting place for four expeditions, two by land and two by sea. The two ships *San Antonio* and *San Carlos* reached the designated rendezvous first, on April 11 and April 29, 1769. Captains Fernando Rivera y Moncada and Gaspar de Portola and their land expeditions arrived on May 14 and July 1. They began construction of the first mission site in Alta California, San Diego de Alcalá, in what is now the city of San Diego.

Even before the mission could be dedicated on July 16, a reorganized land party of sixty-two men headed by Portola set off to the north in search of the Bay of Monterey. This expedition entered what is now Orange County on July 22, 1769. A camp was made in Christianitos Canyon, just northeast of the city of San Clemente. It was so named because the padres performed the first baptism in California there when two little Indian girls were named and blessed.

The next night, July 23, camp was made in San Juan Canyon about four-and-a-half miles from where the mission was later founded. July 24 and 25 were spent on Plano Trabuco, named because a soldier lost his gun (trabuco), either on this expedition or on one of the later trips. On July 26,

the group traveled as far as the present Tomato Springs, a mile northeast of the El Toro Air Station.

Up early on July 27, the group needed to find more water for their animals. Scouts reported that an abundance of water and shade was about three leagues away. They traveled from Tomato Springs along the foothills about a half-mile northeast of where the Irvine Ranch headquarters were later located (at what is now between Red Hill and Lemon Heights to the corner of Chapman and Prospect avenues), and on to the east bank of Santiago Creek where they made their camp. On Friday, July 28, they reached the Santa Ana River near the present town of Olive. It was here that the group recorded camping with many Indians and experiencing a strong earthquake. They named the river "El Rio del Dulcísimo Nombre de Jesus de los Temblores" (the river of the sweetest name of Jesus of the earthquakes). However, the soldiers with the expedition called it the "Santa Ana River," because it seemed to flow from the mountains they had named in honor of St. Ann. From this campsite, they angled across the plains toward the hills to the north-northwest. That night they camped with a group of Indians at the mouth of Brea Canyon (just north of the present city of Brea). On July 30, they left La Habra Valley close to the route of the present Fullerton Road, across the Puente Hills, and into the San Gabriel Valley. The name, La Habra, means "the pass through the hills," probably given because of this famous passage.

References: Bolton 1927; Costanso 1910; Palou 1926; Portola 1909; Talbert 1963.



The Mission San  
the mission com



The  
the fo  
until  
retur  
Juan Capistrano  
Engelhardt, v  
coastal lands  
in 1771, was t  
richest, contr  
and much of t  
purposes of t  
California wa  
into loyal an  
Meadows de

The  
a patte  
was th  
manne  
Spain  
ever c  
based