

Enrico Martínez, 1603

PUERTO BUENO DE S. DIEGO*

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FOLLOWING THE ENTRY of English corsairs Francis Drake (1579) and Thomas Cavendish (1587) into the Pacific Ocean, a port of refuge for the Manila galleons sailing along the California coast was planned. Attempts at mapping by pilots of the galleons were made in 1584, 1587, and 1595 without success, and on 27 September 1599, King Felipe III ordered a specific expedition to conduct an accurate demarcation of the Pacific coast of North America. Under command of Sebastián Vizcaíno, *San Diego*, *Santo Tomás*, and shallow draft frigate *Tres Reyes* were outfitted for protracted exploration from Acapulco northward to Cape Mendocino, with specific orders dated 18 March 1602 to chart and sound all bays, islands, reefs, and bars; take solar and stellar readings, note wind directions, and mark locations of anchorages, water, and firewood sources; and to clarify geographic information, establish universal place names through topographic description, and prepare detailed logs and charts. In addition to experienced mariners, royal cosmographer Gerónimo Martín Palacios was named first cosmographer, and Discalced Carmelite Fray Antonio de la Ascensión was to serve as second in the post.

Sailing from Acapulco on 5 May 1602, the expedition followed the coast of New Spain, charting northward from Navidad in Nueva Galicia to Mazatlán, across the Gulf of California, and again northward from Cabo San Lucas to Cape Blanco in Oregon. Thirty-two detailed charts, thirty of which are of the California coast, with appropriate compass headings, scale in leagues, profiles of land forms, soundings, indications of anchorages, written descriptive annotations, and place names affixed to points of land, bays, islands, and other landmarks visible from the sea were produced by Palacios and Ascensión between 19 May 1602 and return of the expedition to Acapulco on 21 March 1603. Place names assigned by Vizcaíno still in use include *San Diego*, *Santa Barbara Channel*, *Point Conception*, *Monterey Bay* and *Point Reyes*. The thirty-two maps were redrawn in clean copy in Mexico by Enrico Martínez, cosmographer, mathematician, engineer, and printer. The chart of San Diego Bay, the first map of Alta California, and typically of all of the other charts, provided soundings, anchorages, and descriptive topography. Anchorages of the expedition at the *Islas Coronados* and *Point Loma* are shown, as is *Mission Bay*, the “bay with a shallow entrance.” When joined, the charts present a remarkably good rendition of the coastline, and, as a result, cartography of the Pacific coast of North America to 1771 remained unchanged (map 14).

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Puerto bueno de S. diego. [Manuscript, 30.5 x 19 cm.]

*THE GOOD PORT OF SAN DIEGO

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