



"In the Shadow of the Sacred Cross"

by a member of the Sullivan (Phelan) family.

CHAPTER I

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME

TODAY the sun is hot on the beach at Santa Cruz, where trailing piles of seaweed, fishing boats and brown-limbed bathers are lying on the stretch of white sand. Colored sun umbrellas sprout everywhere like bright, poisonous toadstools, shading the eyes of drowsy summer people. Mothers are hunting strayed offspring, children with tin pails and shovels are digging important holes in the wet sand or howling hopelessly for lost Mothers; white-hatted sailors with jingling pockets stroll past in search of merry, welcoming eyes; the plump, prosperous man of business down from the city for the day, anxiously watches his complexion peeling in the sun, while the summer girl is everywhere — in the surf, under the bright umbrellas, riding the yachts or the hydroplane, in hiking breeches or white muslin, tanned, or carefully powdered and freckle-creamed.

The band playing madly in the grandstand wars with the weird tones of jazz coming from the slots of the Penny Arcade, the tireless steeds of the merry-go-round canter by in endless circle, overhead the dizzy trains of the scenic railway flash by, and the crowds, the concessions and the entire Casino reeks with noise, music, laughter and the mixed odors of waffles, hot dogs, peanuts, the smell of kelp and the Pacific air.

And out across the Bay of Monterey, upon the sea, the ships are passing by.

Perhaps the beach at Santa Cruz has changed but little in the last 400 years. Then bathers and fishers were lounging on the strand, boats were tossed at rest on the sand and the mountain of Loma Prieta loomed high in the background. But the white sand was empty of bright umbrellas, bathing suits, old newspapers and discarded drinking cups. No jazz came from the Casino, for there was no Casino, nor a city back of the beach. Perhaps from the redwood mountains where the city now stands came the muffled thunder of a war chant or the scream of a beast struck by a flint-headed arrow.

Even then, so many centuries ago, Santa Cruz had her summer people. From the land of the Mendocino, from the valley of the Sonoma, and the mountains of the San Benito they flocked together during the months of the warm moons. They were tall and dark and broad; they carried arrows and bows and tiny, black-eyed papooses; and they came, for the fish and the abalone of the Bay of Monterey. The dried fish was good in the dark months of winter to eat with their bread of ground acorns, and from the bright shells of the abalone a clever-fingered Indian could make many treasured ornaments. Life in summer was sweet to the holiday people of ancient tribes — as sweet to the sturdy old Indian chieftain of centuries ago as to the tired businessman of today, lounging under his umbrella and listening to the band on the white beach at Santa Cruz.¹

No white man had stepped on all the vast shores of America. Columbus had discovered an island off the coast of eastern America; but that was all. We know but little of the red skinned men and women that tracked over our continent then. A few names of the tribes that lived around the beach at Santa Cruz have come down to us, but they are twisted by the English tongue, and the race that

stretched from coast to coast has all but vanished.²

Spain was master of the world. England was struggling desperately with Spain for supremacy. Both countries were building ships and sending explorers out into the desert of unknown waters to satisfy their hunger for land. The continent of America was a virgin world. Which was to possess her?

The two countries prayed for power as they tracked down the wastes of the world, one under the banner of St. George and the dragon; the other — Spain, following the symbol of the Sacred Cross — Santa Cruz. This is the banner Spain sought to plant around all the earth.³

Half a century after the days of Columbus the Indians standing on the white stretch of sand that marked the side of future Santa Cruz, watched a ship come to rest out on Monterey Bay. No craft but the native canoes had plowed before through the waters of the upper Pacific.

It was the Spanish sailing vessel of the daring navigator Cabrillo.

CHAPTER II

ADVENTURE

DRIVEN over turbulent waters by the love of adventure and added power, passing stranger shore where the denizens of a new world watched with amazed eyes, the ships of Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo sailed fearlessly, coming at last to anchor on Monterey Bay opposite the white beach of Santa Cruz.

Spanish blood did not flow through the veins of Cabrillo, although he sailed under the flag of that all-powerful country. He was of Portuguese parents, but beyond this we know nothing of the bold mariner who was the first to discover the coast of California. This we may safely surmise — his was a famous and trustworthy name, for the crafty kings of old Spain did not choose reckless or inexperienced men to command their ships to distant lands.

Cabrillo had brought safely up the coast his ships, the *San Salvador* and *Vitoria*. He had watched the shores of a new world drop steadily behind his ships, and he had talked by signs to the people in skins and feathered headdresses. The Indians had told the Spaniards of maize growing inland, and had also explained that they kept cows. These reports, says the historian, Bancroft, "are far from accurate."

At one place where they stopped for wood and water below the present Monterey Bay, they found the "head town of the province," and there an ancient Indian hag ruled over all the tribes. This old woman visited the *Vitoria* and the *San Salvador* and remained for two nights on board one of the ships.

They then sailed on, past the lofty summits of the Santa Lucias, past the tribes of fishing Indians, past the stretches of sandy coast.

A storm breaks overhead. The *San Salvador* and the *Vitoria* are driven apart and out to sea, where furious winds and waves strive to batter them down. All through the day of Sabbath and on into the noon of the next day the ships struggle apart for mastery of the waves. Then the waves settle and become calm, the dripping clouds run down toward the south, the sun appears at meridian overhead and across the settled Pacific the two vessels wearily look for one another like long parted friends after misery.

On to the northwest drifted the parted ships, under small forestay sails, alone.

For many hours they labored on, while the sun descended heavily down the west. At sunset, while the wind is veering in the direction of the setting sun, the vessel of the commander that is tipped with the banner of Spain turns landward in hopes of finding her companion vessel driven in to shore.

Dawn came, and with it land. The sea is high and threatening; the coast is rocky and steep and without harbors. The wooded mountains of the Santa Lucias are frosted with snow.

They drive laboriously through that day and the next, and at evening a sail appears against the gray sunset. The ship consort is found!

"Heave to!" is the cry, and the sails are taken in, and hearts are lighter.

The next day is the 15th of November, 1542. The skies are still gray, the weather fretful and stormy. Cabrillo is suffering from his arm, which was broken the month before in the south on the island of Juan Rodriguez. They are hunting a harbor and a river of fresh water. But no break appears in the strange California coast.

It is dawn, and the sun whitens their sails as they lie under a coast that is shaggy with pines. "Bahia de los Pines" they name it, and one of the points is christened Cabo de Pinos. This, say historians, is the coast of Monterey. Surely the sick eyes of Cabrillo looked from the deck of the flagship upon Loma Prieta above the white beach of Santa Cruz, and wondered if fresh water ran down to that shore.

But the ships of Cabrillo, found neither port nor fresh water, and the high and sullen sea would not permit landing. Nothing could be done but lie at anchor, and lying at rest out on the high sea, they took possession in the name of Spain of the nameless shores of Santa Cruz and Monterey.

CHAPTER III

THE SPANISH MAIN

WE DO NOT KNOW where Cabrillo is buried. His bones are probably lying down on the island that is named the Juan Rodriguez, after him. There he broke his arm, that was the cause of his death. Half a century ago a grave was found with a headboard of the seventeenth century, but all is mystery, covered over with drifting sands. This first white man to look upon the shores of California died on the third of January, 1543, one year after the anchoring near Monterey Bay. He died with the prayer that his ships might sail on to the north.

Bartolomeo Ferrello, "Levantine pilot-in-chief," assumed command, sailed again past the bay of Monterey and the white beach of Santa Cruz, past what is now San Francisco Bay, Sonoma county, and probably as far as Cape Mendocino, returning to Natividad in April.

The first California tour was over. And the Indians on the beach at Santa Cruz sent their swimmers and canoes out past the breakers after fish, and hunted among the crevices of the rocks for the opalescent abalone, and knew nothing of the ship that went by in the storm.

Or they went up to the hills to gather the baskets of acorns at the feet of the giant oaks, and boiled them to mush by putting them in a tight basket filled with water and dropping in hot stones. There was bear to be killed and roasted, and moccasins to be made, and deer to be tracked, and for the lifetime of a man after the ships of Cabrillo sailed by for

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

"This brief outline of the background of Santa Cruz was written by one of the Sullivan girls, perhaps Ada, who is still living, the last of her generation, Mother Agnes, at the Carmelite monastery at Santa Clara, which had been built by her parents, the late Judge Francis J. and Alice (Phelan) Sullivan, her Mother being the daughter of the '49er, James Phelan, and sister of Hon. James Duval Phelan, United States Senator, of Phelan Park in this community. There were three other Sullivan children, Alys, who became Mrs. F. L. Murphy; Gladys, who became Mrs. Richard Doyle, and gave Santa Cruz the present replica of the Franciscan mission on the upper plaza, and Noel Sullivan, who died at Carmel a couple of years ago. These children, after the death of their Mother, built Carmelite monasteries at Carmel and San Diego, and just before his death, Noel built a third at Berkeley. The Santa Clara monastery is built on a portion of the James P. Pierce estate (see *Frontier Gazette*, Spring issue, 1958, *Gleanings from Unk Iffert's Notebook*.) We are indebted to Warren 'Skip' Littlefield for the material, which he turned over to us some years ago, he, in the meantime apparently having lost the original by lending it elsewhere. There are some errors in the copy we have: sentences not completed, and there seems to be no Chapter XI. Wherever possible we have finished the phrases, as we believed the author would have. Each of our additions is in parenthesis. The numerals you will find from time to time, refers to notes in an appendix in the last pages of this paper, likewise numbered under their appropriate chapters.

the last time there was no disturbance in the tribes of the bay. Then, after many years, other sails stood out against the sunset off the beach of Santa Cruz.

The voyage of Cabrillo had given to Spain all of the coast of the Pacific. So far England had not quarreled with the claim. Each year a ship laden with treasure for Spain sailed from Manila down to Panama, following a low northern route across the Pacific. But as soon as trailing seaweeds or branches floating in the water showed they were nearing land they changed their course for the south and Acapulco.

These were the ships that aroused the spirit of adventure in Francis Drake, and he left England to follow the treasure galleons of Spain and capture them, if he could, while they were on their way home from Manila. Many millions of dollars worth of treasures left the holds of the ships of Spain to lodge in the Golden Hind of Francis Drake.

When Cabrillo had sailed into the Bay of Monterey, opposite the white beach of Santa Cruz, he had taken the coasts of California for Spain. Spain looked upon Drake as an English poacher.

After exploration and adventure and claiming all the land north of San Francisco bay for Elizabeth, virgin queen of England, and failing to find the mythical Strait of Anian, Drake sailed down and away from the coast of California and back to England, to be knighted.

But the Indians, who perhaps stopped their fishing on the beach of Santa Cruz in 1580 to watch the white sails of the ship go by, knew nothing of Queen Elizabeth or Francis Drake or the millions of dollars worth of Spanish treasure in the hold of the Golden Hind.

Even the departure of Drake from the western waters did not leave the Spanish ships free from fear. Other Englishmen were willing to take his place on the high seas to harry the treasure galleons.

This was the force — the force of terror — that was sweeping the tide of civilization slowly in the direction of unknown California, as though a powerful wind of fate were veering and slowly driving strange new ships before it into the turquoise bay of Santa Cruz.

CHAPTER IV

SHIPS OF SPAIN

WHEN THE mists were lifted from the bay of Monterey in the distant days of our ancestors, the Indians fishing on the white beach of Santa Cruz might have wondered as they watched the passing of strange sails. For hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years they had lived and fished and hunted on the site that was to become

Continued on page 5