

# Spanish California



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# Spanish California

# Introduction

Have you ever entered a library because you wanted to check out a book to learn about California's history and how it took place? If, so you are about to find out. In this book you are about to learn about California and it's history. It is fascinating and soon you will be so full of facts that I hope you share.



# The Spanish Come To California

It all started with the Russians coming to California to hunt *sea otter*. This was a concern for the Spanish because they were the ones who wanted to have control of California and taking more land. So they decided to build a few buildings to try and take over. Once they made their way there they *constructed* buildings. There were three different types of *structures*, there were the missions, pueblos, and presidios.

The *presidios* were military bases, the *missions* were what they used to convert the Natives to Christianity. *Pueblos* were what got the Natives to come to the missions. They were Spanish *settlements*.

The first mission established was done so by Fr. Junipero Serra in 1769. He also founded the mission *system*, which is just the path along which the missions followed. The missions did most of the converting and changed the Native Americans from *hunter-gatherers*



which are based from the word were the Natives who would hunt and gather food for the tribe, to farmers and *skilled laborers*.

At first, when the Spanish came to California they brought along diseases but since the Native Americans did not know this they went in *willingly*, but when word spread about the *harsh* conditions many refused to go, so the Spanish rounded them up like cattle. When the natives tried to escape, they were severely punished. The diseases the Spanish brought were very dangerous and spread very fast.

They brought diseases like, bubonic plague, chickenpox, pneumonic plague, cholera, diphtheria, influenza, measles, scarlet fever, smallpox, typhus, tuberculosis, and whooping cough.



# Life in a mission

The Spanish were very harsh on the Native Americans. Missions were *self-supporting* buildings and served as a sign of Spanish *civilization*. The name they used to call the native Americans who went into the mission willingly and were willing enough to convert were called *neophytes*. These neophytes eventually became sorry they had changed and were not allowed to leave the mission unless given permission to. They had to wake up early and do back breaking work.

They became *homesick* and missed their families and villages. At night there were sleeping rooms for the priests, soldiers, and neophytes. Some missions allowed the neophytes to go out at night. But in others, they were forced to stay because the fathers were afraid they would not come back once they were getting home. Many neophytes *resented* the Spanish for all they had done and ran away. The ones that managed to escape went back to their villages and requested that

their *allies* helped them strike back at the missions, presidios, and pueblos so they would leave. Several neophytes were caught, but that did not discourage the others. These attacks were called *revolts*.



Most of the revolts did damage to the mission but several did not do much. The Natives were instructed to go to church every day. They were taught to sing prayers in Latin, and Spanish. None of the Native Americans were able to understand what they were saying or what it meant but they sang anyways for two reasons. First, some of them liked the tunes of the songs. Second, they just did it because they knew that neophytes who did not worship, were whipped or were

forced to work harder. The priests always believed they were being helpful by teaching them prayers and making them *skillful*, but many Native Americans disagreed. There were many problems in this Spanish California and one of them was that they couldn't clearly understand each other. Luckily, one priest wrote a 400 page book translating Spanish to the Native American language and vice

versa. It helped some of the priests understand the language but in other missions some were forced to learn the Spanish language.



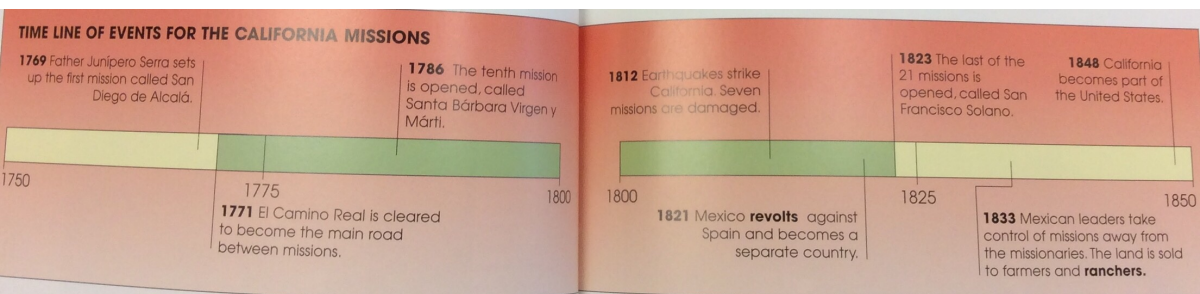
# Chapter 3: Fr. Junipero Serra

Fr. Junipero Serra was born on November 24th, 1713. When he was born his parents named him Miguel Jose. He was born in the island of Majorca, which is a small island near Spain. Once he was in his thirties he joined the *Franciscan order*. In 1737 he changed his name to Junipero Serra, which is also when he was ordained a priest. As a priest he went to Italy and Mexico preaching.

While in Mexico all of the Franciscan monks were told to go and create missions. After the missions were complete they became the responsibility of Fr. Serra. A few of the missions Serra founded were, San Carlos Borromeo de Carmelo, San Antonio de Padua, San Gabriel Arcangel, San Luis Obispo de Tolosa, San Fransisco de Asis, San Juan Capistrano, Santa Clara de Asis, San Buenaventura. In all, that is nine missions that Serra founded. In total there were 21 along the El Camino Real,

or "The Kings Road," which started as a foot trail through trees and grass. A traveler could walk from one mission to the next in about one day. The El Camino Real was created for mainly one reason which was so that missionaries, soldiers, and other people could take supplies to the newer missions. The missions also used it to transport food from the mission to the military base or also known as presidios. The El Camino Real stretched about 530 miles.

# Here is a timeline of events from 1750 to 1850.





So as you can see the Spanish were very harsh on the Native Americans, but once the founding fathers were able to gain America *independence* from England they became like all other countries and wanted to gain more land. When they found out about California and the Spanish trying to take control of California this new country became interested in it and joined the great battle for California. As their army grew stronger they were able to drive the Spanish away from

California and took it to be one of theirs. California has belonged to the United States of America ever since.

# Glossary

Sea otter - a marine otter of the shores of the northern Pacific, with a very valuable fur: now greatly reduced in number and rare in many areas.

Constructed - to build or form by putting together parts; frame; devise.

Structure - the way a building is made

Presidios - a garrisoned fort; military post

Pueblos - a town or village.

Settlements - a colony, especially in its early stages

Hunter-gatherers - a member of a group of people who subsist by hunting, fishing, or foraging in the wild

Skilled laborers - a skilled person engaged in work that requires bodily strength

Willingly - to have a will and your mindset on doing one thing

Harsh - ungentle and unpleasant in action or effect



Self supporting - the supporting or maintaining of oneself or itself without reliance on outside aid

Civilization - an advanced state of human society, in which a high level of culture, science, industry, and government has been reached

Neophytes - a person newly converted to a belief, as a heathen, heretic, or nonbeliever; proselyte

Homesick - sad or depressed from a longing for home or family while away from them for a long time

Resented - to feel or show displeasure or indignation at (a person, act, remark, etc.) from a sense of injury or insult

Allies - to associate or connect by some mutual relationship, as resemblance or friendship

Revolts - to break away from or rise against constituted authority, as by open rebellion; cast off allegiance or subjection to those in authority; rebel

Skillful - to have lots of skill on one topic

Franciscan order - Franciscans are people and groups (religious orders) who adhere to the teachings and spiritual disciplines of St Francis of Assisi and of his main associates and followers, such as Clare of Assisi, Anthony of Padua, and Elizabeth of Hungary, among many others

Independence - freedom from the control, influence, support, aid, or the like, of others

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