



Frank Andonaegui

FRANCISCO ANDONAEG UI-Step Grandfather June 25, 1850 died 1932 by

Lesley Webster Bowers:

The history of Francisco de Andonaegui is possible because of research performed & written by **Hilary Heath**, historian at the University of Ensenada. Because of her information, we were able to sift the facts from fiction. The so call myth and mystery of Andonaegui Monica Huerta, Carmen Vidal de Villarino's Granddaughter claims her old aunts would boil her in oil having found out Andonaegui true history so great was his esteem in the family. "Andonaegui was from such a rich family" always bragging on Andonaegui this and that as if he was a prince. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Francisco Andonaegui started life humbly in the mining camp of Sonora California at the height of the gold rush in the year of 1850. Sonora, California, a town founded during the gold rush of 1848-1849, by the Sonorans of Northern Mexico. He was not a long angular face Spaniard but a rather handsome blue-eyed man whose family was from Spain although the name is Basque in Origin. Because of his place of birth, his parents were obviously part of the California gold rush, the greatest migration of people in American history. Both his mother and father are natives of San Sebastian, Spain.

Before his tenth birthday the family resided in San Francisco, California their occupation at the time is unknown. It is likely they are with the Ormart family that had a life long acquaintance with Francisco's mother Estafania Echenbilla. By 1860, the Andonaegui family resided in Santa Barbara, California and Francisco Andonaegui's father Jose Maria is a simple tailor. By 1870 Jose Maria, was in the general merchandise business and in 1874 bought a building on Main Street, Santa Barbara, California (Dry Good Store). Certainly and remarkably the father estate increased significantly and by 1870 his combined worth in real estate and personal assets is \$17,000.00; considerably more thereafter I am sure. While 17,000.00 is not a great fortune at the time it was considerable and most definitely increased thereafter giving him the financial means to buy a building. Jose Maria Andonaegui died in 1885 and apparently left his estate to his wife. There is no indication whatsoever that Francisco Andonaegui; the only son received an inheritance from his father.

Francisco also known as Frank and by the Ensenada children and grandchildren as Poncho. At the age of 20, he was working as a clerk, presumably at his fathers store and his assets totaled \$500.00. By age 30 Francisco lived in a boarding house in San Francisco again his occupation was clerk. Although married at the time, his wife Kate Flynn (also Kate Santee, a divorcee) whom he married August 6, 1879, was not in his company her whereabouts unknown. Evidently, Frank and Kate did not have a marriage made in heaven. They were however, the parents of a daughter named Francisca and possibly a son Antonio although Antonio may have been Kate's illegitimate child that assumed the Andonaegui last name. Antonio Andonaegui was born in 1892.

One thing is certain Kate had more than one affair during her marriage. One relationship ended in the death of her lover. In 1889, a gun shot wound killed a lover by the name of James B Henderson. Witnesses claim three shots were fired; Kate was also shot in the chest but survived. The death of James Henderson was ruled a suicide. Hmmmmm!!! Certainly makes for interesting speculation. Where is CSI when you need them?

Francisco Andonaegui tried but failed to obtain a divorce in Mexico. Both parties, however were U.S. Citizens therefore, it was out of Mexico's jurisdiction. Francisco claimed Kate was pregnant by another man, and further she had refused to follow him to Mexico. In addition, Francisco requested custody of their daughter Francisca. Kate's argument was that he had abandoned her giving her the right to take a lover (lovers). The divorce granted in 1893 finally took place in Santa Barbara, California. Kate received custody of their daughter and she and the children disappeared. I found later records that indicate Antonio Andonaegui died in California in 1966. We will never know if Francisco Andonaegui and Antonio Andonaegui ever came face to face.

Francisco Andonaegui had a reversal of fortune between 1880 and 1882. Remember he was a clerk in San Francisco, Ca in 1880 but by 1882, he and his partner Miguel Ormart arrived in Ensenada. The first registered contract between Andonaegui and Ormart shows a social capital of \$6,000 pesos. Each partner contributed 3,000 pesos, the exchange rate at the times was about \$1.50 pesos to the dollar, which included property and value of any merchandise on hand. Considering the accomplishments of this partnership in a mere

Media Objects for Francisco Frank ANDONAEGUI



Attached to in this tree



Francisco "Frank" ANDONAEGUI
1850 - 1932

Other trees this object is saved to

Auker Family Tree

by mmhuerta213 on 26 Mar 2009

three year's one would say they had the Midas touch. The partners established the first commercial house. In 1882, as previously mentioned the population of Ensenada was 50 inhabitants, although within the same year it would grow to some 200 as Ensenada was named the capital of the Partido Norte (It was not yet a state). Wow, what a mystery, why would they have gone into business in a town that was scarcely populated. Francisco Andonaegui's statement to Bancroft, tells that he believed there was good land and he saw great possibilities in the future of the port of Ensenada de Todos Santos, as it was known at the time.and Mr. Monopoly was ready to role.

Upon Francisco's arrival in Ensenada, he was a U.S. Citizen and as such acted as the first consular agent of the United States for a year or two. However, there were problems and apparently, he lost this prestigious position. I do not know at what point he acquired Mexican citizenship. He and Ormart took on a number of activities, some of them successful, others less so; they were agents of the Pacific Steamship Company (the Newbern), they took over a match factory, electricity plant, wine production and owned a concert hall....to name a few!

How did Andonaegui and Ormart obtain Santo Tomas Winery and Vineyard?

As merchants, Andonaegui and Ormart opened up credit lines that were usually paid in produce. This was a common practice, especially in a period and region where cash was hard to come by. Loreto Amador who owned several properties in the valley of Santo Tomas, once part of the property of Mission Santo Tomas opened a credit line at the store. Mr. Amador owner of Rancho Paredon Colorado; and the orchard and vineyard that has traditionally been known as Los Dolores (Santo Tomas). In 1884, Andonaegui and Mr. Amador established a contract whereby Amador had open credit to any merchandise in Andonaegui's store. Payment on the purchases from Amador was through all the wine produced at Santo Tomas, at the rate of \$1 peso per gallon and with a 2% monthly interest, and if that did not cover the debt then with wheat, corn, and beans. Loreto Amador died in 1887, leaving a debt to Andonaegui and Ormart of \$1,540.00 (Pesos or US Dollars-not certain). The estate and properties of Amador all passed to his wife, the widow of his son and his 7 grandchildren. In 1894 Andonaegui in a legal suit had a mortgage placed on the Orchard/Vineyard, situated in the Ex mission of Santo Tomas and in 1895 took possession.

As the author of this story, I am allowed my own opinions and my theory is the failure to pay debts and foreclose on properties is the reason Andonaegui set up business in Ensenada. Perhaps, his father, the tailor obtained his financial success in the same manner. Perhaps "the apple didn't fall far from the tree". Living in California both father and son were well aware of the loss of Mexican land grants in the same manner. In addition, the Mexican grants not lost through failure to pay debt (generally because of monthly accruing interest rate) ultimately were lost to attorneys representing the landowner. Pity, most land grantees could not read or write and were unaware of the documents or terms of conditions of loans, and were at the mercy of unscrupulous men of the legal profession.

Sometime in the 1920's Governor Rodrigues began imposing hefty takes on Andonaegui and Ormart's wine production. Andonaegui strenuously objected to the taxation and it was not his first run in with local authorities. The consensus is that Rodrigues appetite was set on owning Santo Tomas and thought by increasing the tax burden he could force Andonaegui to Sell. WHAT! Two dates given as possible for the sale of Santo Tomas are 1926 and the other is 1931. I believe both dates are incorrect as according to Viola Vidal Bowers she frequently visited Santo Tomas with her grandmother Clara Andonaegui, therefore the date of sale must be a few years after 1931. Cousin, Gloria Rendon, confirms she too visited Santa Tomas as a young child. What is factual is that in 1935-1936 General Rodriguez, twice governor of Baja and interim President of Mexico moved the winery to Ensenada and the name became officially Bodegas Santo Tomas. The University of Ensenada historian has been unable to find the contractual agreement of terms, condition, date, and purchase price.

The history as related by Viola Vida Bowers: My Grandmother Clara sold the winery after the death of grandfather, Francisco Andonaegui. Rodrigues had been a frequent visitor at my grandmother's home in Ensenada, and I personally met him. Then, many dignitaries visited Ma. Clara's house where she often entertained people of status. (Viola always refers to her grandmother as Ma Clara)

Villarino oral history. Andonaegui sold the winery out from Clara because he felt she spent too much time at Santo Tomas.

Miguel Antonio Ormart (Ormart family,-lifetime acquaintances of Andonaegui's mother) Mike was born in Santa Barbara in 1859, and died in San Francisco March 4, 1925.

*Married to Elena Joaquina Altube the couple were parents of two daughters. Information is not available as to the date or reason the partnership between Andonaegui and Ormart ended. Note: Within the last couple of years, Santo Tomas Winery relocated from Ensenada returning to its original site in the valley of Los Dolores. **How did Francisco Andonaegui acquire Rancho Vallecitos?***

Rancho Vallecitos is a historical property consisting of approximately four Spanish leagues, over 16,000 acres. The property was an original land grant to Abel Stearns of California fame. Undoubtedly, Abel Stearns lost the property at the end of the Mexican war. The second owner as far as we know was a Jorge Ryerson who in 1890 has need of cash. Therefore, in that year he sold the property to Andonaegui's mother, the widow

Estefania Andonaegui. Ryerson with the promise to buy the land back within two years..

Unable to do so within the allotted time he obtains an official promise that he will be given an option to buy the property in December 1894 and in the meantime the property will not be sold to anyone else. In 1894, Estafania Andonaegui died and her only son Francisco Andonaegui acquires rights to all properties under her name in Mexico. Estafania's somewhat convenient date of death ended the contractual agreement between herself and Ryerson. Vallecitos is a wheat and cattle ranch and to this day, the property is owned by cousins in Ensenada. It is rather assumed but not proven that the property on Ryerson Street was obtained in the same manner although we do not know if Mr. Ryerson was the original owner of that particular property.

Francisco Andonaegui and Clara also owned several other properties in the valley of Santo Tomas but we are not certain what or where they were located. I think one of the properties Agua Dulce (Sweetwater) may have been the original Rancho Los Dolores. This information comes from Viola Vidal Bowers and there is not a living person other than Viola that remembers Aqua Dulce.

*Viola's history: Agua Dulce was also Rancho Los Dolores; Santo Tomas was never called anything but Santo Tomas Villarino's History. Santo Tomas was called Los Dolores. The family always referred to the winery as Los Dolores. The Historian: Los Dolores is the entire valley of Santo Tomas Mission Property and I too thought the winery was called Los Dolores. I have searched the deeds and records and find no reason why the Winery was referred to as Los Dolores; it is Santo Tomas. Lesley's info to the Historian: Find Agua Dulce and you will find the exact location of the original Rancho Los Dolores according to my mother-in-law. At some point, the original Ensenada Cemetery was relocated and Francisco Andonaegui's body was exhumed, the body desecrated with wine and his diamond cuff links stolen. Ironically, the only male left to carry on his name was Antonio the assumed illegitimate son! **Note: Francisco Andonaegui, Uncle Simon Villarino, Uncle David Zarate were founders of the Ensenada Government. Note: Francisco Andonaegui siblings were Hortense and Mary Andonaegui de Thompson her husband was an attorney in Santa Barbara. A child of Mary Andonaegui de Thompson married into the well-known and historical California family Dana with connections to the de la Guerra and Carrillo families of Santa Barbara.***

correction: To arrive at Agua Dulce you had to go through the Winery property maybe 15 miles Grandmother and I would bring water back to the main house from Aqual Dulce

 LesleyBowers44 added

this on 17 Jan 2009