Anza's Military Costumes

by Jack S. Williams

A number of modern representations of Anza's expeditions show the colonel's men bedecked with steel breastplates, morion helmets, and matchlock muskets. Ironically, Anza would have been no more familiar with such equipment than he would have been with the flight suit of a modern-day astronaut. The Anza expeditions took place during the period of the American Revolution, not Cortes' conquest of Mexico! Fortunately, abundant documents and contemporary pictorial evidence offer an authentic view of the appearance of the men who followed Anza on his long trek to San Francisco.

Uniforms

The Anza expeditions occurred at an important turning point in the military history of northern New Spain. Up until 1772, the arms and equipment of the leatherjacket soldiers (soldados de cuera) were covered by the Regulation of 1729 which specified that troops wear a uniform designed by their commanding officer. As a result, the soldiers stationed in the presidios of northern New Spain wore a confusing array of red, green, and blue. Because of the unwillingness of their captains, or their officer's lack of funds, the great majority of the troops made do with no uniform at all.

In spite of this regulation, the outfits worn by Anza's troops impressed the Marqués de Rubí during his inspection of 1766. He noted with pleasure the excellent appearance of the soldiers he inspected in Tubac. These men, he wrote, were equipped with blood red coats with blue cuffs, lapels, and collars. They also wore blue pants, leather sword belts, (bandoliers), black, broad-brimmed felt hats, woolen socks, and shoes. The pants and coat were equipped with brass buttons. Each man carried a massive blue cape lined with red felt. Figure 1 (next page) shows the probable appearance of Anza soldiers in 1766.

The Plan's Progress

In early May, a preliminary draft Comprehensive Management and Use Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail was sent to the Washington Office of the National Park Service for policy review to ensure its consistency with laws and regulations. At the same time, the preliminary draft was sent to task force coordinators for task force review for accuracy of facts for each county and for consistency with task force visions for the trail. The deadline for returning comments back to Meredith was June 10, 1994.

Comments will be incorporated into the draft plan which will be made available to the public for a 90-day review in late August or September.
Rubi was so impressed by the Anza-designed outfits, that he apparently used them as a model for developing a set of recommendations for new uniforms. King Carlos III approved the recommendations, but made some minor modifications. Because of the battlefield victories of Frederick the Great, a style craze had developed in Europe for Prussian military designs. As a result, the King changed the color of the coats from red to blue. The new regulation of 1772 specified that the entire army in northern New Spain would wear a blue coat with red lapels, collars, and cuffs; blue trousers; a shoulder bandolier with the name of the presidio; a black tie; a pair of shoes; and a black hat. Figure 2 shows some of Anza's soldiers as they might have appeared in 1776.

Inspections and instructions dating from the 1772-1780 period, indicate that the new coats were cut shorter than those used a decade before. The pants and jackets had cotton linings. Underneath the coat, a white shirt was worn. Ribbons were used on the hat and hair. The officers were to wear tricorn hats while on garrison duty. Both the enlisted men and the officers were ordered to wear flat, broad-brimmed hats when on campaign.

About 1780, the men were ordered to wear a linen or leather vest. A button was added to the hat so that the brim could be folded up on the right side to better enable the soldiers to aim and fire their carbines and muskets. All the hatbands were a standard red color (the traditional national military color of Spain). The shoulder belt for the sword, which had been inscribed with the name of each presidio, was dropped. A blue serape was also officially adopted as regulation equipment. Many of these changes were probably based on innovation produced by frontier commanders, such as Anza.

The dress version of the soldier's outfit was essentially the same as the campaign version. Because of its excessive weight and heat, the leatherjacket was not normally worn in the presidios. During formal inspection, the men were expected to arrive fully equipped with their weapons, uniforms and mounts. Through the eighteenth century, the soldiers on campaign wore knee-high, wraparound, leather leggings called "botas." The devices were a cheap and effective alternative to regular military boots.

As was customary in the later eighteenth century, Anza's outfit differed from that of his soldiers in quality of materials as well as overall design. In 1780, the dress uniform of presidio officers consisted of a blue dress coat with red collar and lapels, decorated with gold braid and gold buttons; a pair of blue trousers with gold buttons; a tricorn hat with gold braid, and a blue vest with gold buttons. When on campaign, the officers wore a shorter blue jacket with red collars and cuffs. This garment was more suitably worn with the leatherjacket. Other campaign gear included a vest of linen, leather, or wool, with gold braid; a black or white, broad-brimmed hat with gold trim; and a pair of leggings. Officers were also allowed to wear a blue serape with gold trim. The commanders wore their hair in a long ponytail, and were allowed to use hair nets, known as reducillas.

Because the new regulation was gradually implemented in Sonora between 1772 and 1775, the men of the first Anza expedition (1774) may not have had a chance to give up their old red coats. During the second expedition, Anza's soldiers definitely wore the new pattern uniforms.

Armor
Steel helmets and breastplates had disappeared from the frontier army long before Anza's time. The body armor worn by the presidio soldiers of the eighteenth century consisted of the cuera which evolved from the military buff coats popular in Europe and the New World during the previous century.

The typical cuera of the middle eighteenth century consisted of eight layers of well-dressed, white, deer skin. It varied from mid-thigh to
knee length. It was sleeveless and tied in front with straps that went around the wearer. Filigreed leather lined with red cloth decorated the seams and pockets. Before 1772, they were often decorated with gold and silver ornaments. Officers and enlisted men were ordered to wear the cuera on campaign. However, because of its weight, the cuera was usually only worn when danger was imminent.

A leather shield was the other piece of armor used by the Anza expedition members. Two distinct styles were popular among the leather jacket soldiers: the adarga, a heart-shaped or figure-eight shaped shield; and the rodela, a round or ovoid shield. Most shields were made of two or more thicknesses of bull hide and were used to deflect arrows and spear thrusts. Prior to 1772, there is little evidence of any uniformity in these devices. Some were decorated with religious symbols or family coats-of-arms. After 1772, most officers used shields decorated with the royal crest. Adargas and rodelas were carried on the left arm which was thrust through two leather loops sewed on the back.

**Weapons**

During the period of the Anza expedition, frontier troops were armed primarily with lances, swords, and carbines. After 1772, a brace of pistols was issued. Some men also carried large knives called buldeques or navajas.

The main weapon of the presidio soldier, the lance, stood about nine feet in length. Most surviving lance heads have a lozenge shape and measure ten to thirteen inches. Some were apparently inscribed with the name of the presidio. Soldados de cuera used swords of a variety of styles ranging from crude espada anchas (broad swords) made on the frontiers to more elegant weapons imported from Europe. When mounted, the soldiers generally suspended the sword in a scabbard tucked into the saddle. When on foot, the soldier used a bandolier, worn either over or under the cuera. Firearms had flintlock (not matchlock or percussion cap) mechanisms. The term used for Anza’s carbines, escopetas, has the meaning of “shotgun” in modern Spanish. In the eighteenth century the word was used somewhat interchangeably with fusil (musket). When mounted, the soldier carried hand guns and carbines in specially constructed holsters attached to the saddle. When on foot, they could thrust the pistol into a belt. Figure 3 shows the appearance of the dress and field uniforms of officers in 1780.

The soldado de cuera used a dramatic military costume. Loaded down with weapons and armor, he proved a formidable opponent to hostile Indians and rival European armies. The abundant documentary and pictorial record of the Spanish army in the New World provides a data set from which those who are interested can assemble an accurate picture of these colorful soldiers. We hope that artists who create depictions of Colonel Anza’s amazing legacy will stop perpetuating the steel breastplate myth that has confused so many earlier generations.

**Recommended Readings:**


Brinckerhoff, Sidney B. and Odie B. Faulk. Lancers for the King: A Study in the Military System of Northern New Spain, with a translation of the Royal Regulation of 1772, Arizona Historical Foundation, Phoenix. 1965


Faulk, Odie B. The Leatherjacket Soldier: Spanish Military Equipment and Institutions of the Late Eighteenth Century, Sociotechnical Publications, Pasadena. 1971


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These frontier officers (Figure 3) wear 1780 examples of the dress uniform (above left) and the field uniform (above right).
Notes from Heritage Trails
By Doni Hubbard
Photos by Bob Keys

In May of 1992, I wrapped up my job as “mother of the bride” and took on the new responsibility of Volunteer Coordinator for the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail (for the California area, that is). Thanks to Richard Williams and the Anza Coalition, the Arizona portion was well in hand. That is why it seemed so fitting when May 9th rolled around this year and just as we began to celebrate our daughter's second wedding anniversary, here came my copy of the preliminary draft Comprehensive Management Plan for the trail.

Our family had just been discussing how the past two years had flown by and yet so much had happened. How could it all have been done in just two years? That's exactly my sentiment as I consider the Draft Plan prepared by Meredith Kaplan and all the volunteer work that helped make it possible. How could all this ground have been covered and this information gathered in just two years! I could easily fill a newsletter with all that's been accomplished by dedicated individuals, county task forces, and a conference devoted to the trail. In the limited space I have here, let me simply again express my appreciation on behalf of NPS and HTF for your generous efforts in support of the trail.

Now, in the spirit of the determined Capitán Anza who inspired us in the first place, let's keep moving forward!

On the horizon is the formation of the Amigos de Anza, a special chapter of Heritage Trails Fund, which is being organized to continue and increase grass roots support for the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail. Whether your interest in the trail is riding, hiking, bicycling, or staying in touch with your nation's history, you are invited now to join us as we continue working with the National Park Service to turn the vision for the trail into reality. To organize the Amigos between Arizona and California, the trail has been divided into five geographic areas. Drawing on county task force members and those who participated in the October Anza conference/workshop, a steering committee has been formed to get the Amigos underway.

Let us know of your interest now (see box on back page), and you'll be welcomed as a charter member of the Amigos de Anza.

In Arizona (eastern and western sections), the Amigos will be headed by Richard C. Williams, Don Garate, Nancy Kelly, Donald Kucera, and Val Prehoda. In the northern California area, the organizers are Steve Haze, Maria Rieger, and Alice Quinn.

Alternates are Geoffrey Carter, Mary Christopherson, Phil Valdez, Joe Adamo, and Russ Skowronek. The central California Amigos are being organized by Vie Oberm, Myra Douglass, and Helen Shropshire. Winston and Joan Elstob will serve as alternates. Jeannie Gillen and Linda Palmer will head the organization in the southern California areas with the assistance of Ruth Kilday and Melissa Lovelady. For more information on how to take part in the formation of Amigos de Anza, please feel free to phone me at (415) 948-4118 or George Cardinet at (510) 672-5072.

Lest you think that launching a new project might be all work and not fun, let me assure you that the name Amigos was inspired by the fact that those working for the trail for the past two years have been rewarded with a host of new friends. (This certainly follows in the tradition of the reenactment members who have lobbied with George Cardinet for historical designation of the trail since 1976.) Let me give you a recent personal example.

When I was asked to give a school program for Women's History Month last March, I got the courage to face 300 third to sixth graders by calling on good friends I wouldn't have had without working on the Anza Trail! Don Garate, interpretive specialist at Tumacácori National Historical Park, Phil Valdez (historian and Anza expedition descendant), and Meredith Kaplan of NPS generously supplied me with research materials as well as their insight into the roles played by women and children on the Anza expedition. Monterey county task force coordinator Helen Shropshire loaned her excellent slide show which makes use of art, music, and original text to tie together all the historical elements of the trek.

Steve Haze, Santa Clara County co-coordinator, retraced with me the expedition route around the Cupertino area (it went right through the school grounds where the program was being given), and the California Lancers came in full dress.
to make the presentation more authentic. The atmosphere created by Jeanne and Hamilton Ryder and Joe Adamo was made even more colorful by the presence of two miniature donkeys joining us in the auditorium. They were humble but highly effective representatives of the significance of equines to the expedition. From the rapt attention of the audience, I think it would be fair to say that Juan Bautista de Anza gained 300 new friends that day. Three newspapers covered the event which was held on the same day that Anza and his soldiers had marched through the Cupertino area 218 years before.

Strong community interest in the trail is also evident in San Luis Obispo County judging from the excellent press coverage which Myra Douglass generated through her task force work. Not only was there a quarter-page color photo of expedition descendants on the step of the San Luis Obispo mission in the March 7 issue of the Telegram-Tribune, a local property owner has approached Myra expressing interest in dedicating a trail easement and staging area in recognition of the historical significance of the trail. The Wranglerettes of Atascadero own 30 acres of land along the trail. Through representatives, they have shown interest in adopting the segment of the trail that crosses their land, as well as designating their arena as a possible staging area. This is an opportunity which is not only very exciting, but most appropriate. Shirley Moore who founded the Wranglerettes was co-chairman of the county's Anza re-enactment in 1976.

There's more good news from Santa Barbara County. Task force members Vie Obern and Virginia Gardiner-Johnson joined with Ray Murray (Chief, Division of Planning, Grants, and Environmental Quality, National Park Service) as three of the 21 panelists at the April 16 Santa Barbara Coastline Conference. Vie reports that the conference was encouraged by the participation of a NPS senior level planner, not to mention the good news that Santa Barbara County had been awarded $1.8 million in Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) dollars for its trail program. Congratulations to a hard-working county, because this is truly a tribute to persistence, not good luck. Santa Barbara County trail activists, led by Vie, have been on the job a very long time.

Well, if you've had any doubts about what volunteers can accomplish, I hope they have been dispelled by some of the stories mentioned above. And if you've ever had any doubts that your volunteer work is appreciated, I think you would be encouraged to know how Steve Elkinton of the National Park Service office in Washington, D.C. opened the recent Interpreting America's Long-Distance Trails conference which I attended with Jeanne Gillen and Val Prehoda in Salt Lake City. Speaking to an audience which was predominantly professional planning and park staff, he urged them to remember that "volunteers are the heart and soul of the trails movement. They are the ones who get the trails designated in the first place... Volunteers are the institutional memory of the trails system." Thanks, Steve, and NPS for the encouragement and the excellent conference. More about that in another newsletter. In the meantime, let us hear from YOU, amigo.
Along the Trail...

 fête We're on the map! The Tumacácori to Tubac segment of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail is shown and described in *The Arizona Atlas and Gazetteer* published by Delorme Mapping of Freeport, Maine, 1993.

 fête Fifteen hundred people attended the Very Special Arts of Nogales, Arizona, commemoration of the expeditions of Juan Bautista de Anza on March 26, 1994. The festival was held at Challenger Elementary School. "...[T]he history that we studied and worked on will remain with all of us for the rest of our lives," reported Lillian Hoff, District Coordinator.

 fête The De Anza Heritage and Genealogical Society of the town of Anza celebrated National Trails Day, June 4, with an open house at the Little Red Schoolhouse. They recognized both the Anza Trail, which follows Coyote Canyon from Anza-Borrego Desert State Park across Anza Valley to Riverside, and the Pacific Crest Trail which can be joined in Coyote Canyon.

 fête In Santa Barbara County, construction is planned for two segments of the Coast Trail, which may be marked as the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail. A 3.5 mile trail between Gaviota Beach and San Onofre Beach will be completed by 1997, and 1.2-miles of trail linking El Capitan State Beach to El Capitan Ranch Road will be completed in 1996.

 fête Also in Santa Barbara County, the Western Commercial Space Center (VCSC) has proposed a commercial rocket launch facility on Vandenberg Air Force Base which will visually impact the historic Anza Trail and the Point Conception landscape, sacred to the Chumash. The National Park Service is now reviewing the Draft Environmental Assessment.

 fête Myra Douglass, San Luis Obispo County task force coordinator, alerted the San Luis Obispo *Telegram-Tribune* and the *Atascadero News* to the passage of Anza's group on March 2-4, 1776. Both papers carried articles with photographs which created public awareness of the history of the area and of the national historic trail.

 fête In addition, Myra has represented the Anza Trail interests in Price Canyon where Shell Oil plans 65 new wells and three steam generators. She notified County planners of the historic route and the presence of the El Buchón site. Mitigations for unavoidable impacts of the development may include an off-road multi-use trail within the historic trail corridor and interpretation of the Chumash culture.

 fête Helen Shropshire, Monterey County task force coordinator, and Winston Eltsob, task force member arranged a meeting with Bob Reese, Historian, and Kris Quist, Curator, Monterey District of the State of California Department of Parks and Recreation, and Meredith Kaplan, NPS, to discuss the possibility of an Indian museum/interpretive center on the Fort Ord property. It is possible that such a facility could display part of the Holman collection of Indian artifacts, owned by the State.

 fête Edna Kimbro of Watsonville called to say that Leon Rowland, Los Fundadores, at the Bancroft Library on the U.C. Berkeley campus has excellent information on the Anza expedition genealogies.

Cartas

Dear Meredith:

I love your definition of native American: "Anybody born on this continent is a native American." [See "Cultural Diversity on the Anza Trail" by Don Garate, *Noticias*, Volume 3, No. 1] The definition as stated is close to accurate, for it includes me and, presumably, you. I feel, however, that it was meant to include American Indians. If so, it must also include Eskimos and ... native Hawaiians as well.

The term, deemed "politically correct" by many federal and state agencies ... seems to pertain only to American Indians. There probably are Indians who are not offended by the patronizing term, but I have yet to meet one. I remember the observation of Kesley Edmo, chairman of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Council, who in 1971 told me that he resented the term native American, that he didn't want to be confused with Eskimos or Hawaiians, and that he was "damned proud to be an Indian."

I understand that the style chief of *The New York Times* has issued a directive that they be referred to in print as American Indians, and that the term "native Americans" should no longer be used in the paper. Other media have followed suit. It may be that the National Park Service feels that it is politically correct. But for the most part, the tribes feel it is politically incorrect, and I most respectfully request that you use it no longer.

Cordially,
Gregory M. Franzwa
Director, The Patrice Press
The San Mateo County Trail Committee has adopted the historic route along the El Camino corridor with the Bay Trail and the Ridge Trail as recreational alternatives. The Park and Recreation Commission has approved the trail as part of the county Trail Plan. Bob Emer, County Trails Coordinator, and Dale Ryman, San Mateo County Anza Trail task force coordinator, worked closely together to achieve this recognition. Since then, the National Park Service has recommended a county trail on the historic route rather than the Ridge Trail as the alignment.

On March 26, Joan Throgmorton and Phyllis Drake of the Santa Clara County Anza Trail task force presented information on the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail to the Santa Clara County Trails Plan Advisory Committee which is updating the County Trails Master Plan. Word has it that they captivated the audience with the history of the trail.

The grand opening of Peralta Adobe and Fallon house, sites along the Anza Trail, was celebrated on Sunday April 17, 1994, hosted by the San Jose Historical Museum Association.

The San Francisco Department of Public Works, in consultation with Friends of Mountain Lake and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), is developing a landscape/shoreline stabilization plan for Mountain Lake Park, the campsite of the Anza expedition at the Bay of San Francisco. The plan includes removing exotic (non-native) plants, planting native species, stabilizing the lake edge, confining foot traffic to designated access routes, and providing handicapped accessible viewing areas. GGNRA in coordination with the Western Regional Office of the National Park Service is planning an interpretive wayside exhibit about the Anza expedition. GGNRA and the City of San Francisco share ownership of Mountain Lake.

The California State Lands Commission is administering a Carquinez Strait Public Trust Resource Management Program which will evaluate the status of commercial, natural, cultural, and scenic resources and coordinate recreation, public access, and resource management along the Strait. Over 15 miles of the Anza Trail route are within the study area. For more information, call Elizabeth Patterson, State Lands Commission, at 916/322-7829.

The Heritage Trails Fund represented by George Cardinet, Executive Director, and Alice Quinn, Alameda County task force coordinator, participated in meetings to preserve a trail easement along Corral Hollow Creek along the historic route. They met with representatives of the Alameda County Planning Department, the East Bay Regional Park District, and the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District, and with the landowner, Dennis Gibbs, to share maps and convey the importance of the historic route. As a condition of approval of the tentative map, a 25 foot trail easement will be dedicated to the park districts for design, installation, and management. The National Park Service will help with marking and interpretation.

Trail Publications
Southwest Parks and Monuments Association is preparing a 16-page history of the trail with text and illustrations which will be available the first of October, 1994.

Arthur and Marjorie Miller are writing a trail guide for the 19 national trails, Trails Across America, due for publication in the fall of 1995. They visited sites and people associated with the Anza Trail during the month of May, 1994.

Corrections
We offer apologies to the Very Special Arts of Nogales, Arizona. We incorrectly stated that their festival would be held in Tucson. Held at Challenger Elementary School in Nogales, the festival commemorated the expeditions of Juan Bautista de Anza. We appreciate all they have done to create public awareness of the national historic trail.

More on an International Trail
Trail enthusiasts in Santa Cruz County, Arizona, continue to pursue the international connection of the Anza Trail. In early February, Don Garate, Interpretive Specialist, Tumacácori National Historic Park, John Bezy from Saguaro National Monument, John Blake, Anza Trail Coalition Director, and Andy Ahmann, trail volunteer, traveled to Sonora, Mexico, to see what support exists for recognizing the trail in Mexico. They visited Fonteras, Arizpe, Hermosillo, San Miguel de Horcasitas, and other historically important sites in the Juan Bautista de Anza story. They found support for trail recognition.

Don notes, "As an interpreter at Tumacácori, it is rather difficult to interpret the two-thirds of the trail to the north of us and ignore the third to the south. It is rather like explaining the sanctuary and altar in the church while ignoring the nave that you just came through to get there. Most people want the whole story."
The Name is Juan Bautista de Anza

Some confusion still exists concerning “to de or not to de.” Just what is the name of the trail? The trail, as Congress specified, bears the full legal name of Juan Bautista de Anza, with a lower case “d.” The question arises when, in the interests of brevity, one uses only the surname. Was the man Anza or De Anza?

Based on the work of Don Garate and Maria de Lourdes Gortarez, A Documentary Analysis of the Surname of Juan Bautista de Anza, on references in the journals of the expedition, and on the writings of Herbert Bolton, the National Park Service will always refer to Anza, the Anza expeditions, and the Anza Trail. For consistency and public understanding, when we omit the Juan Bautista, we will use “Anza.”

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HERITAGE TRAILS FUND invites you to join with them in forming a special chapter to celebrate, promote, implement, and protect

THE JUAN BAUTISTA DE ANZA NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL.

If you are interested in working with HTF and the National Park Service in support of the trail, AMIGOS DE ANZA wants to hear from you.

YES, I AM INTERESTED. Please send information on Amigos de Anza to:

NAME__________________________
STREET ADDRESS__________________
CITY__________________STATE____ZIP____
PHONE__________________________

MAIL TO: AMIGOS DE ANZA
          c/o Heritage Trails Fund
          1350 Castle Rock Road
          Walnut Creek, CA 94598

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NOTICIAS DE ANZA
The Newsletter of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail

National Park Service
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Division of Planning, Grants & Environmental Quality
600 Harrison St., Suite 600
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(Attention: Meredith Kaplan)