

PUTTING MISSION VIEJA DE LA PURÍSIMA ON THE MAP

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ABSTRACT

For over a century, the original and longest-occupied site of Mission La Purísima (1787-1812) had been gradually covered by Lompoc's suburban residences. A grant in 1989 from California's Department of Parks and Recreation allowed the City to purchase the remaining undeveloped lots and conduct an archaeological testing program to identify locations of the buried ruins. A computerized mapping system, Autocad, was used to deduce the architectural ground plan of the mission quadrangle and to align this with the modern landscape. An artist's interpretation added three dimensions to the reconstruction, instilling life and cohesion into the long-forgotten historic community.

MISSION SALVATION

On Thursday, December 5, 1912, several hundred people gathered in the small agricultural town of Lompoc to celebrate the anniversary of Mission Concepción Purísima de María Santísima. Founded on December 8, 1787, this eleventh of the California missions was destroyed 25 years later in the notorious earthquake of 1812. Rebuilt across the valley to the northeast (Figure 1), the second establishment lasted some 22 years before it was removed from Catholic Church management to deteriorate under private ownership. The Lompocians gathered in 1912 to celebrate not only the 125th anniversary of the founding of the original site, but the 100th anniversary of the second.¹

Ceremonies began downtown at 9:30 a.m. County attendees from Santa Barbara had taken the Southern Pacific Railway to the station at nearby Surf the day before, where they were collected by a parade of automobiles. Lompoc schools were closed for the day and the children, marshalled by their school band and an American flag, led the procession to the old Mission site five

blocks away. From here the crowd proceeded up the hill overlooking the ruins and the town.

Below them were the melting outlines of a large adobe complex, generally square in shape and estimated to have been about 400 feet on a side (Thompson and West 1961:30). Rows of rooms made up the perimeter, while other adobe buildings were scattered outside. In the center of the ruins were the remains of the impressive church, identified by towering remnants of wall some 30 feet high and by its stone entryway. The Mission's aqueduct still brought water to the site area from San Miguelito Canyon. From the distance, the paths of Lompoc's compass-straight streets outlined the city grid that would eventually overlie the ruins.

Bishop Thomas Conaty of the Diocese of Los Angeles and Monterey conducted the mass, assisted by Fr. Zephyrin Engelhardt from Santa Barbara Mission. Senator Campbell from San Luis Obispo spoke of the history of the site and Mrs. Emma W. Lillie, past Grand President of the Native Daughters, came from San Francisco to present an El Camino Real commemorative bell.

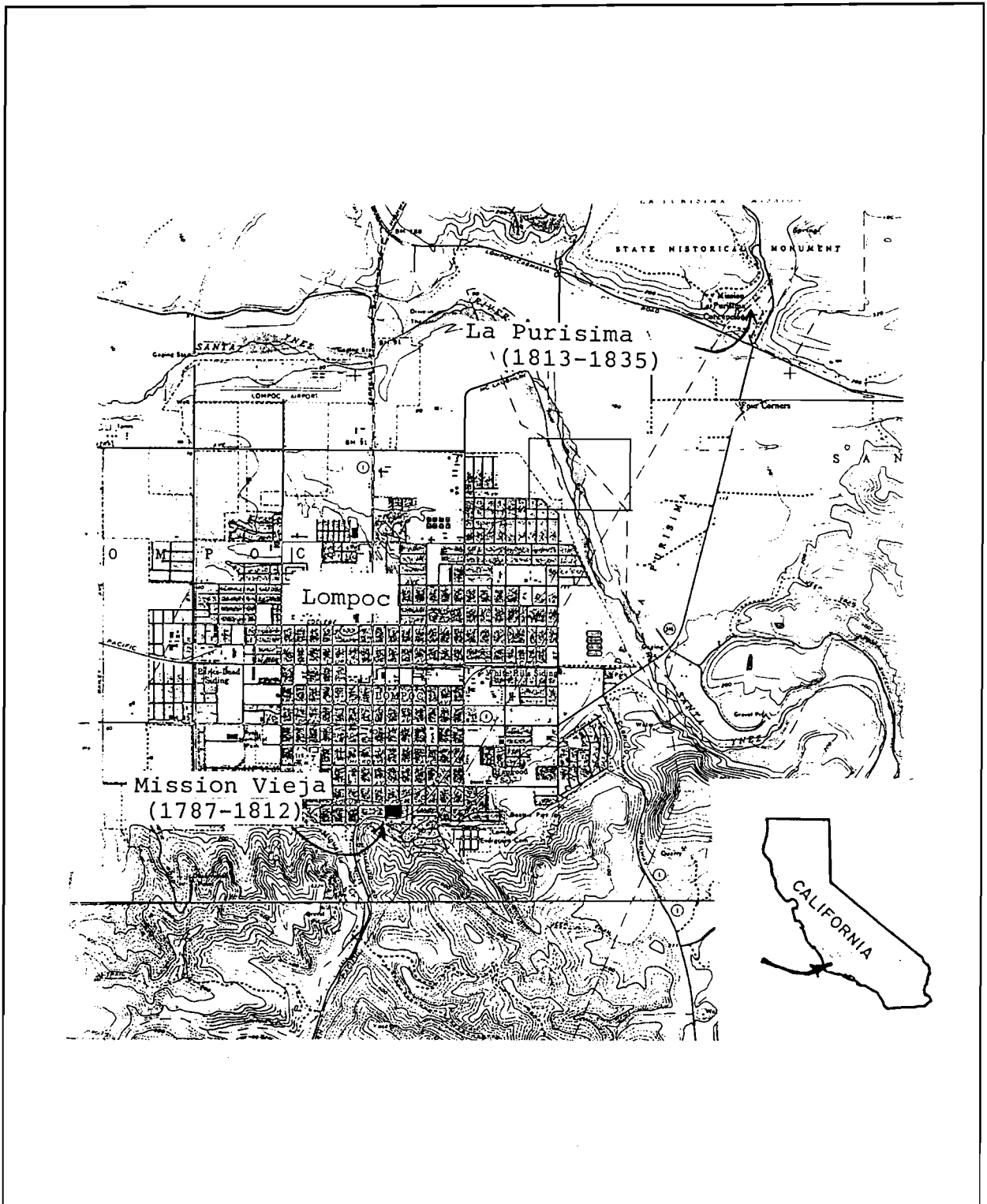


Figure 1. The vicinity of Lompoc, showing the two sites of La Purisima Mission. Lompoc U.S.G.S. 7.5' topographic quadrangle.

Judge J.V. Coffey, also of San Francisco, sent his regrets.

The climax of the gathering was the dedication of the 20-foot-high cross on the hill where the first Mission cross was said to have been sited. Made of reinforced concrete and illuminated by electric lights, it was visible day or night from the surrounding area. A group of Indians from Santa Inés Mission, led by elder Fernando Librado, knelt around the edifice and movingly chanted the mission-taught "Hymn to the Cross." A "sumptuous banquet" for several hundred at the Odd Fellows Hall closed the celebration.

Although the event was devised by the newly arrived parish priest, Fr. Charles Raley, it was essentially a civic affair orchestrated and promoted by the Chamber of Commerce. At this time, Californians were fully aware of the historical and romantic attraction of mission ruins, and the people of Lompoc recognized the treasure that lay within their town. Enthusiasm was high and the word "reconstruction" was prominent when talking of plans for the future. Two years later, however, Fr. Raley was transferred to a parish in the south, enthusiasm waned, and the project faded like the valley's morning fog (Engelhardt 1932:21-24).

Lompoc steadily grew. The agricultural town was a bulb-producing center by the turn of the century, and the flower industry soon expanded to seed production. Successful mining of diatomaceous earth in the hills to the south brought Southern Pacific up San Miguelito Canyon in the late 1920s. Passing along the base of the hills, the grade for the tracks nearly obliterated the south wing of the old Mission quadrangle.²

Although the first site was disappearing from both memories and the landscape, the 1912 celebration had helped to focus attention on La Purísima's second site at the mouth of Los Berros Canyon. Several of the Mission's buildings had been maintained through the late 1800s, and their stately ruins still presided over the site. A 1905 restoration effort had failed, but in 1934 the site

caught the eye of an official of the newly created Civilian Conservation Corps. The opportunity for site restoration as one of President Roosevelt's New Deal work-relief programs sparked immediate action. The land was quickly deeded to the State of California by both Union Oil and the Catholic Church and the site designated as La Purísima State Historic Monument. Between 1934 and 1942, several hundred young men lived at, surveyed, excavated, studied, and rebuilt the second Mission site. Careful archaeological, architectural, and historical research resulted in an exemplary restoration that would come to be known as the "Williamsburg of the West" (Hageman and Ewing 1980; Savage 1991).

Meanwhile, the residential area of Lompoc was expanding relentlessly toward the first site. Two farm houses had already been built adjacent to the ruins by the mid-1880s, with the southwest and northeast corners of the quadrangle roofed for barns. By the 1930s, suburban homes were being built over the stone foundations and tiled floors, obscured by their own melted adobe walls. An attempt was made in the 1950s to purchase portions of the original site as an annex to La Purísima State Historic Park, but the effort failed.

Among the few recognizable features left on the surface were the church's stone doorway and a portion of its south wall. In August of 1959, F Street was extended south, bisecting these remains and "bringing down most of the ruins of the original La Purísima site."³ Howard Moore and his wife, who had purchased the two lots that contained the church remains, built their home next to the wall section and, across the street, put up a sign next to the church doors to mark their small, private, mission preserve. Moore and his neighbors, meanwhile, were using unearthened foundation stones and tiles to build retaining walls and decorate their gardens. The only marker for the site, besides Mr. Moore's hand-painted sign, was a plaque put up in 1953 by the Platrix Chapter of *E Clampus Vitus*.

In 1975 an alert Lompoc City Planner, Al Autry, called the U.C. Santa Barbara Anthro-

pology Department when a development permit was requested for one of the remaining portions of the Mission site. Professor Brian Fagan asked the author, recently relocated from the Middle East, to investigate. The studies which followed identified the general outlines of the Mission quadrangle (assisted by photogrammetric techniques), listed the site on the National Register of Historic Places, and helped define an area where further Mission remains might be present (Costello 1975a, 1975b, 1975c; Estes et al. 1977). Less successful was another round of effort to put still undeveloped parcels into public ownership: negotiations with both the California Department of Parks and Recreation and the Archaeological Conservancy were disappointing. Between 1977 and 1983, archaeological studies identified Mission remains on five more lots surrounding the Mission; four of them were developed with houses (Costello 1977a, 1977b, 1977c; Spanne 1979, 1983).

By 1988 six key lots within the former central quadrangle were still empty. Lompoc City Planner Jeremy Graves brought together the author and Lompoc Museum Director Roger Colton to apply for grant money from the Department of Parks and Recreation for the City's purchase of these properties. In April of 1989, approval of a grant of \$375,000 was announced. Most of these funds were earmarked for purchase of the six lots, totaling 1.65 acres. The balance was to be spent on archaeological studies and mapping, and for interpretive displays both on site and in the Lompoc Museum. The last escrow closed in January of 1991.⁴ The few undeveloped pieces of the old Mission site now belonged to the City of Lompoc (Figure 2).

PIECING THE MISSION TOGETHER

The City needed to know exactly where Mission ruins lay underground in order to responsibly manage its new acquisition. In addition to the grant-purchased lots, City streets, sidewalks, alleys, and easements also contained portions of the site. Identification of the layout of

the Mission was also the first step toward any long-term archaeological study. The research program was therefore focused on a precise identification of the Mission's architectural plan.

There were three tasks involved in the research: archaeological investigations defined the ruins; surveyors correlated these with the modern landscape and produced maps; and historical and comparative information was used to flesh-out the site through an artist's reconstruction. Results were used to develop a walking tour of the site, a traveling museum display, a technical report on the archaeology, and this article.⁵

The archaeological testing began in the spring of 1991 directed by the author. Dr. Roy Salls was in charge of field logistics, and Linda Sehgal directed laboratory activities. Twenty-four small excavation units were placed in strategic locations (Figure 3). Most were 1 x .5 m holes, expanded or reduced as warranted; many were profiles of features exposed in vertical cuts; one identified the surface exposure of part of a tile floor; and another took advantage of a water-line repair trench that cut through the north wing. In each unit, the historic soil layers and features, treated as individual strata, guided excavation and analysis (Harris 1989).⁶

The resulting scattered bits of information on Mission structures -- telescopic peeks at a buried and largely destroyed building complex -- needed to be tied together and related to the modern landscape. The horizontal and vertical locations of all Mission Period strata were surveyed, fed into an Autocad system, and joined with the City's data base by M.K. Welch Surveys, Inc., of Santa Maria.

Deducing the conformation of the quadrangle, however, was like a game of connect-the-dots without the numbers. The 24 units had caught the inside of a wall here, a parallel wall there, and a floor elevation somewhere else. Guidance was found in historic sketches and photographs, which suggested the general layout of the quadrangle, and through comparisons with other mission sites.

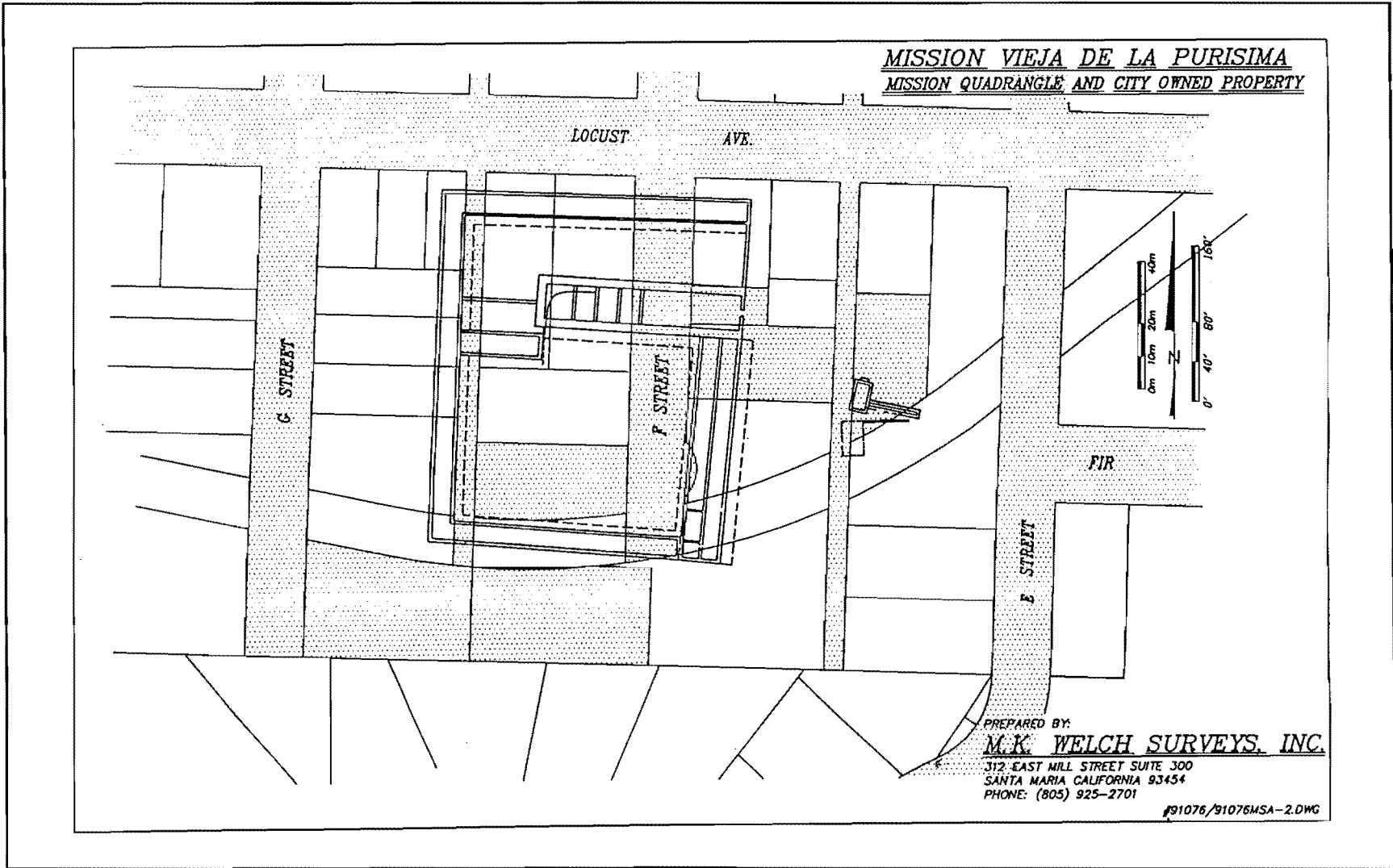


Figure 2. Map of Mission quadrangle and City-owned property.

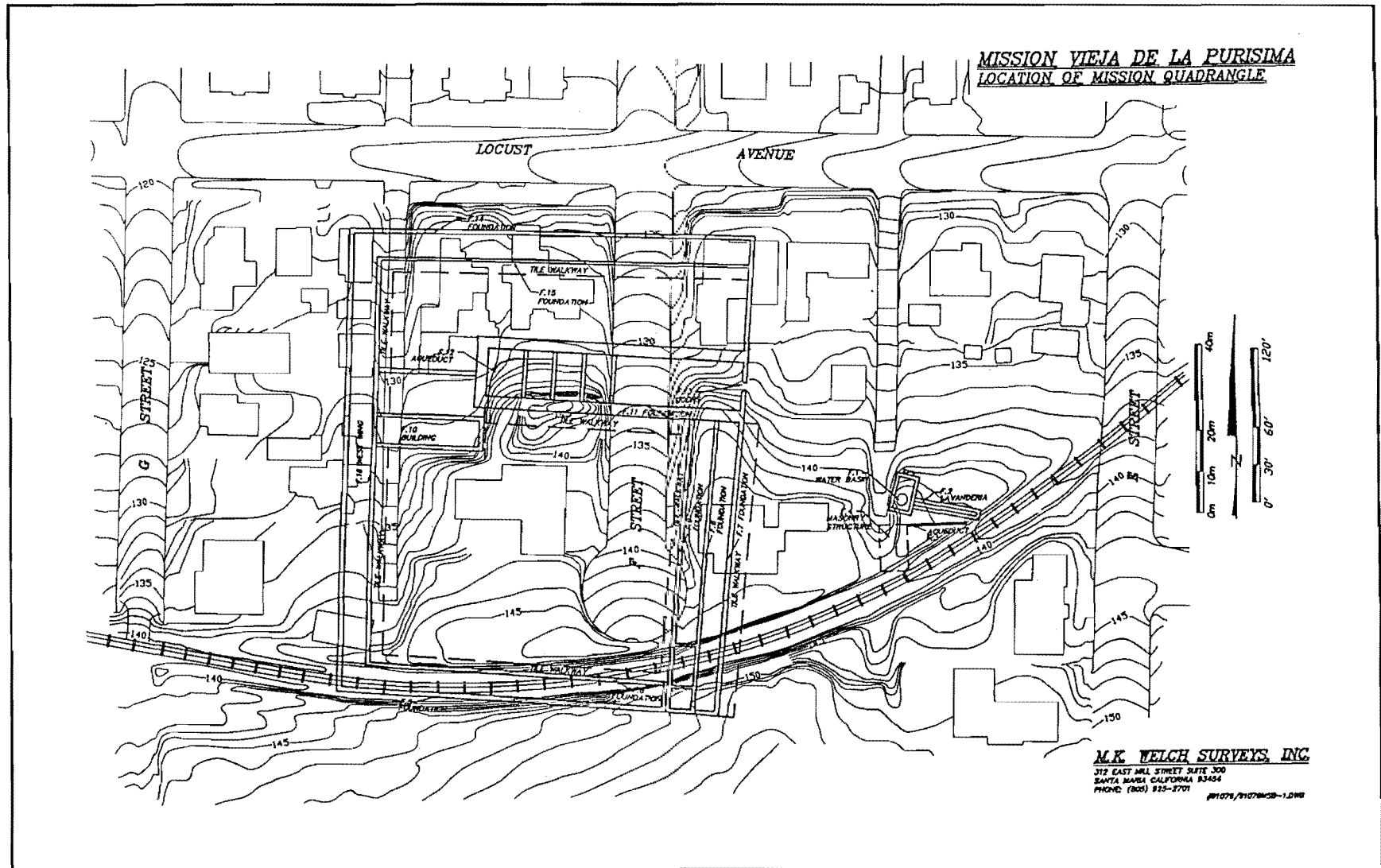


Figure 5. Location of Mission quadrangle on modern landscape.

The Autocad system could try out numerous alignment options with astounding facility. Hours were spent refining details of the ground plan and revising drafts as new information or insights surfaced. The version presented here is our best estimate to date (Figures 4-5).

For the final step, artist Karen Foster Wells took the two dimensional ground plan and made it three dimensional, an exercise that proved to be an unexpected learning experience. This "artist's reconstruction," initially intended only as a part of the public interpretive displays, turned out to be an important analytical tool. Identifications of individual features, structures, and activity areas, which at first appeared solid, often gave way once they were -- quite literally -- placed within the larger picture. Putting roofs on walls, naming structures and buildings, and providing plausible arenas for daily activities required pooling data from diverse sources.⁷ The resulting picture of the past provides our first real look at Mission Vieja de la Purísima (Figure 6).

VIEWING THE MISSION

The eleventh mission to be founded in California, La Purísima had been located at the southern end of the Santa Ynez Valley in the midst of the populous Chumash. In widening concentric rings, the surrounding villages were drawn into the establishment until, by 1811, it supported a population of nearly 1,000 (Johnson 1988). A complex agricultural institution, La Purísima maintained 1,700 head of cattle and sheep; cultivated fields of corn, wheat, and beans; and developed most of the industries needed for self-sufficiency (Engelhardt 1932).

The activities of mission life were centered around the common, public area in front of the church, the *plaza* of typical Hispanic towns. The church and apartments of the Franciscans (*casa de los padres*) sat on the west and the community water basins (*pilares*) and washing area (*lavandería*) in its center. On the south side was the cook house (*pozolera*) with the Indian village

stretching up the hill behind. On the opposite side of the church, the soldiers and their families lived in a row of dwellings.

The Quadrangle

Behind the church and padre's residence were three wings which enclosed, and opened onto, a courtyard (Figure 7). Referred to as a mission's "quadrangle," this complex typically contained workshops, storage areas, and the sleeping quarters of the unmarried women (*monjero*). Access to the quadrangle was restricted to a gated opening large enough for a *careta*. The quadrangle was private and secure; only the front padre's residence wing had rooms that opened to the outside.

The Mission Vieja de la Purísima quadrangle was only approximately square, with sides as long as 114 m and as short as 90 m (375 ft and 296 ft). It differed from most missions in being bisected, off center, by the church building and a row of rooms. It is likely that the southern half of the quadrangle was constructed first and the northern portion enclosed later.

The first permanent church was completed in 1789 (Neuerburg 1987:1). Within six years it was already deemed too small for the congregation, and the population began gathering materials for a new one (Engelhardt 1932:8). In 1798 Frs. Fernández and Calzada wrote that, although they had begun to lay the new church foundations, they were concerned about their lack of expertise:

...owing to the entire ignorance of the Fathers, there is necessary a master or masters, who are experienced in this matter, otherwise the work will not be done with sufficient security for stability. [Engelhardt 1932:11]

Some interesting construction details observed in the 1890s appear to justify this early anxiety:

Here is a noted difference from the walls of other churches. Instead of being six or seven feet thick, as in almost every instance, they were barely three feet thick, although they were subsequently

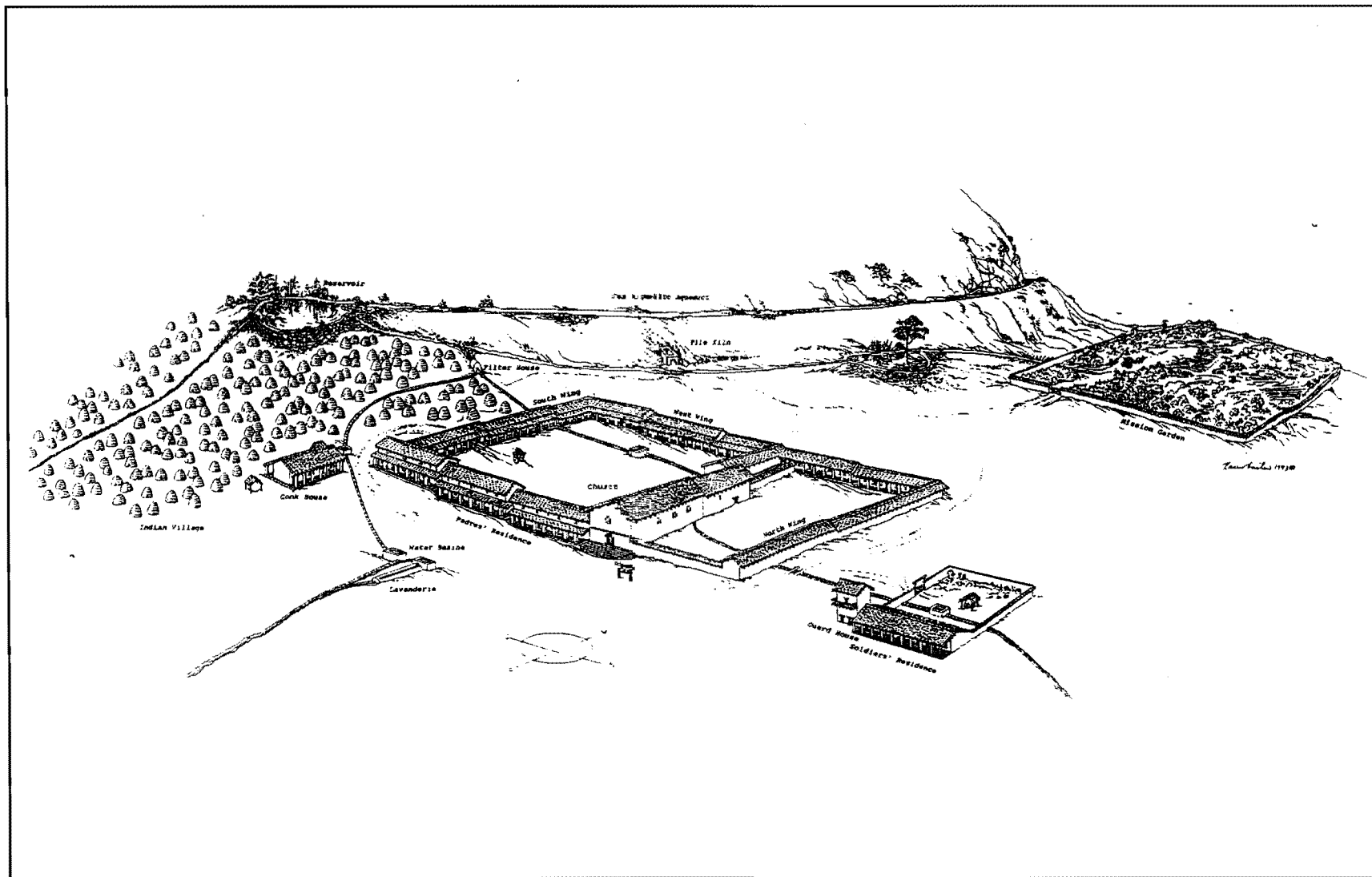
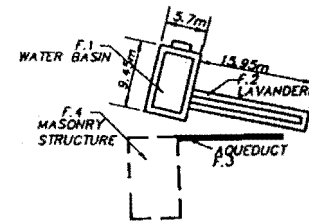
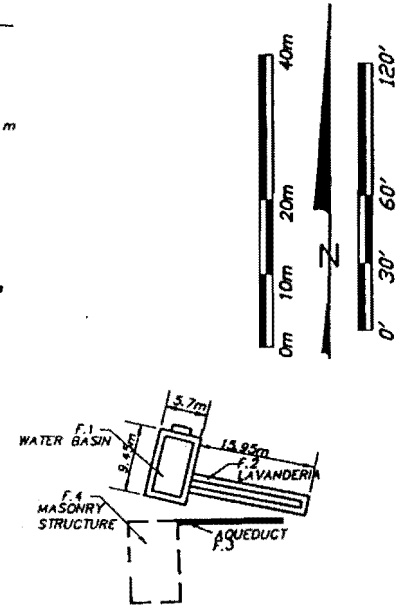
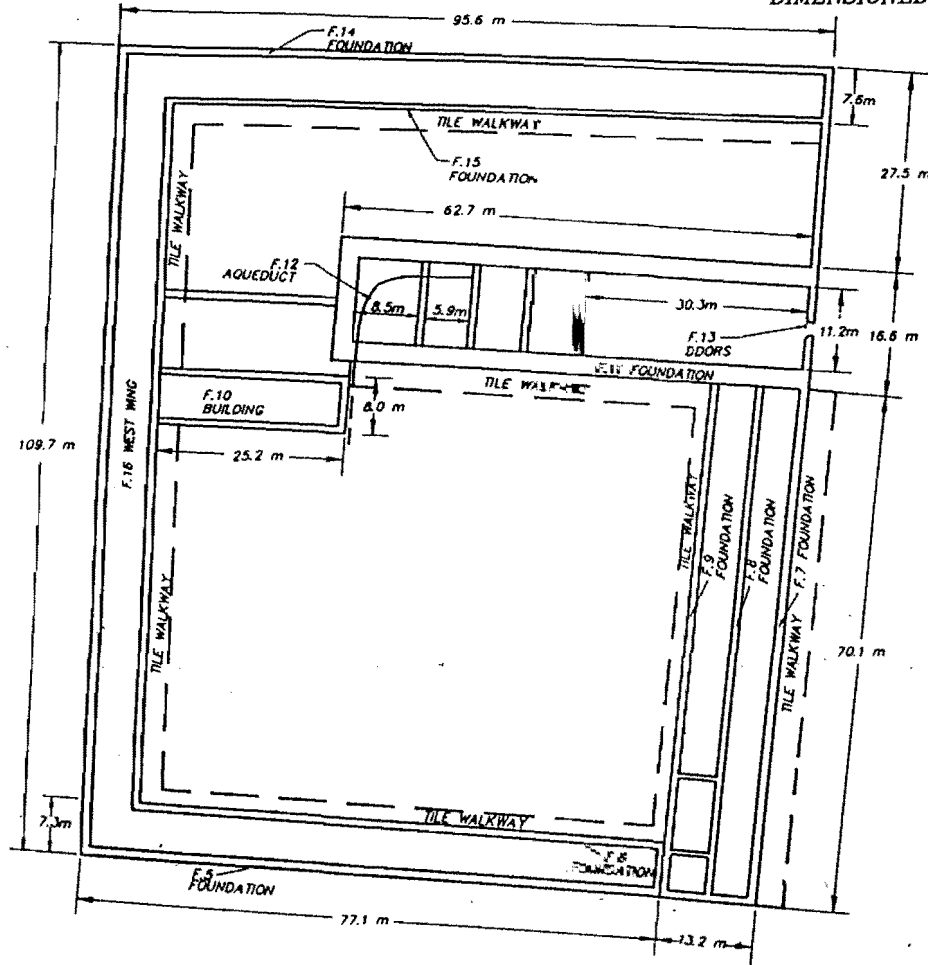


Figure 6. Artist's reconstruction of the Mission Vieja site by Karen Foster Wells.

MISSION VIEJA DE LA PURISIMA
 DIMENSIONED PLAN OF MISSION QUADRANGLE



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Figure 7. Mission Vieja quadrangle with dimensions.

strengthened with extra walls and, in some instances, buttresses. The extra walls were evidently a subsequent thought, as they were not in bond with the first, and were sometimes laid up against a wall that had previously been plastered and painted. [Thompson and West 1961:30]

Completed in 1802, the resulting building was 16.6 m wide and is estimated to be about 63 m long (54 x 206 ft). The exterior adobe walls were two stories tall, about 12 m (40 ft), capped by a gently sloping gable roof covered by fired tiles (*tejas*). The church nave, 30.3 x 11.2 m (99 x 37 ft), filled the eastern half of the building to its full height, while the western half was divided by three two-story partition walls, forming four rooms on each floor.

The most visible standing ruin on the site is the first story of the church's facade, made of mortared stone. It contained an arched doorway, topped on the exterior by a decorative cornice line of protruding bricks (*ladrillos*). A small window would have admitted light to the choir loft, while a paved patio terrace was likely in front to serve as both an entryway to the church and a stage for presentations in the plaza. The wide span of the church would have required a special kind of trussing called *ocho vado* that did not require cross beams. Evidence was found indicating that both the interior and exterior of the church were plastered white and painted with red and black motifs, while documents reveal that the interior was furnished with an impressive array of paintings, statues, and religious furniture imported from Mexico (Neuerburg 1987:1-7).

A covered walkway (*corredor*), 3.5 m wide (11.5 ft), ran along the south side of the church building. It was floored with *ladrillos* laid in a diamond pattern and protected by a *teja*-covered shed roof. With the walkway lying 50 cm (20 in) above the church floor, steps would have led down from a side door into the nave. *Corredor* doorways also accessed the rear rooms. Measurements of the walk showed that it sloped away from the building, carrying surface rain water away from the adobe walls. The packed earthen surface of

the courtyard was seen to be flush with the interior edge of the tile walkway.

Facing the plaza and fronted by a *corredor* of its own, the padre's residence wing was larger than the other quadrangle wings, containing a double instead of a single row of rooms. These front quadrangle wings typically contained the apartments of the priests, sleeping rooms and a *sala* (drawing room) for visitors, and some storage or industrial rooms. At Mission Vieja, this wing was over 70 m long and 13 m wide (230 x 42 ft). Its stone foundations were wider than those of the other quadrangle wings, suggesting a greater height for the walls, likely an upper half story of rooms with small windows as at Missions Dolores, Santa Inés, Santa Barbara, and San Juan Bautista. Archaeology showed that *ladrillos* paved the *corredor* and lime plaster protected the outside walls.

The Mission quadrangle was built on a slope and the *convento* was laid up the grade, rising about 5 meters over its 70-meter length. This was likely accomplished by constructing staggered blocks of rooms; measurements showed the floor of one room to be 1 meter higher than that of its northern neighbor. Pairs of east-west rooms had floors of the same elevation. A tiled floor was identified in one room along with walls covered with white lime plaster. Another room had a *brasero* in the corner: a C-shaped cooking structure enclosing a grate over an open fire.⁸

The other long wings of the quadrangle were made up of strings of contiguous adobe rooms about 7.5 m (25 ft) wide, gable-roofed, covered with *tejas*, and finished on the outside with white lime plaster. The rooms opened either onto the *corredor* lining the courtyard or to each other. There would have been no doors or windows opening to the outside of the quadrangle. The gate to the courtyard appears to have been through the southern wing, where a corral gate is later seen in the ruins.

The southern wing sloped downhill from east to west, dropping a total of 2.5 m (8.2 ft). This

wing was nearly eradicated by the Southern Pacific Railroad, although enough remnants are present to identify wall alignments, tile floors, and original ground levels. One portion of the *corredor* was paved with stone slabs instead of *ladrillos*. A preserved courtyard doorway, cut down into the stones of the protruding wall-footings, allowed students to feel what it was like to stand, literally, on the threshold of the past.

The northern quadrangle wing sloped more gently to the west, losing only 1 meter over its 96-m length. It was tied to the church on its eastern end by a solid adobe wall, capped in *tejas*. One of its central rooms was floored with stone slabs. A tiled *corredor*, 2.8 m wide (9.2 ft), ran along its south wall. Although this tiled walkway was also seen to slope away from the building, there may have been other drainage problems with this lowest side of the quadrangle. An adjacent downhill room initially had its asphaltum floor laid below the elevation of the ground and walkway: a perfect sump. This floor was raised at least two times, first with a gravel fill under a tile floor and then with additional fill capped by the tiles relaid in a diamond pattern. This last renovation raised the floor elevation above that of the adjacent ground, presumably solving the problem.

Archaeological exposure of a portion of the western wing's *corredor* walkway identified the location of this building. Corroborating this evidence, neighborhood residents along its route had long reported discoveries of solid tiled floors lying several feet below the surface in their back yards (Costello 1975d).

A building over 25 m long juts out into the courtyard near the middle of the west wing. A tile floor had been exposed decades ago, apparently by heavy equipment. It measured 5.9 m wide and at least 18.75 m long (19 x 61.5 ft) with the *ladrillos* laid in a diamond pattern within a square border. No *corredors* were found along the building's sides although an adobe wall running off the back of the church seems to have defined an enclosed yard to the north.

Aligned just south of the church building, this structure may represent the north side of the original, smaller, quadrangle. The first church might have been constructed in its most typical location, the northeast quadrangle corner. When the adjacent 1802 church was completed, the first would have been dismantled, producing the off-set in the present alignment. The front padre's wing would have been extended to the south wall of the new church. This construction scenario would also explain the discovery of an aqueduct, which turned and ran squarely underneath the second church. The soldiers' quarters of 1794, abandoned when the new soldiers' facilities were constructed 10 years later (Engelhardt 1932:8,18), might have been incorporated into the northern quadrangle expansion.

The Mission Village

Flanking the plaza on the south, the traditional residences of the Chumash spread up the hillside. Flaked-stone tools, stone bowls and mortars, shell and glass beads, and butchered bone have been found throughout this area over the years. The round, domed structures, built of bent poles covered with woven grasses, came in various sizes housing from three to six people on an average (Johnson 1988:160-161). In 1812, with a population of 1,000, the village may have had some 200 dwellings.

The only record of adobe dwellings for the Indians is from 1798, when nine are reported constructed. This entry is contradicted two years later, when the fathers lament that, due to other priorities, no Indian housing had yet been built (Engelhardt 1932:10,14). It may be that the nine-room building of 1798 was converted into the communal cook house (*pozolera*), identified in the same report of 1800 as a gathering spot for single men. This building sat on the south side of the plaza and appears in several historic photographs and sketches.

On the opposite side of the quadrangle from the Indian village were the quarters of the soldiers and their families. The first permanent soldiers' residence building was apparently constructed in

1794, nearly 12 m long and 5 m wide (39 x 16 ft). Four years later a guardhouse was added. In 1804 a new facility 37 m long (121 ft) was built for five families, including individual kitchens and a "good patio" and with a guardhouse attached (Engelhardt 1932:8, 10, 18). As the archaeological work was underway in the spring of 1991, the foundation stones of this 1804 soldiers' residence were being pulled out of the ground to make way for the footings of a new house.

In the plaza, in front of the Indian village and the padre's residence, sat the public water basins (*pilares*) and washing area (*lavandería*).⁹ One *pilar* was found to be fairly intact. It was rectangular, 9.45 m long and 5.7 m wide (31.0 x 18.7 ft) and stood at least 70 cm (2.3 ft) above ground level. It was constructed of local white shale mortared with a white lime cement; the interior basin was about 91 cm deep (36 in) and was lined with *ladrillos*. The exterior was covered with a pink-colored lime cement, *coccio pesto*¹⁰, and a paved standing platform was built at one end. To the south sat an earlier and somewhat larger *pilar* with a sloping interior covered with the same pink-colored plaster; a covered aqueduct carried runoff water to destinations further east.

Jutting out of the center of the northern *pilar* is the long trough-like *lavandería*, similar to but smaller than the one in front of Santa Barbara Mission. Sixteen meters long and nearly 3 m wide (53 x 8.9 ft), it is constructed of lime-mortared stones and lined with *coccio pesto*. Sitting only 25 cm (10 in) above the original ground level, the washers would have knelt along its sides.

The newer *pilar* and *lavandería* might have been constructed by master carpenter and stone cutter José Antonio Ramírez, who was hired in April of 1811 "to assist in making the stone basins, canals, and all the washing places and drinking trough[s] after finishing the fountain." He was to be paid "200 pesos in silver, with board, 3 drinks a day, and 2 lbs. of chocolate monthly" (Miller 1990:240). Ramírez either finished his work quickly or left it uncompleted, as in October of that same year he is at Mission San

Luis Rey as the architect and construction superintendent of the new church (Neuerburg 1987:7; Miller 1990:242). Whatever he did build during his six months at La Purísima was not in use for very long; it was just 14 months after his departure that the earthquake struck.

Water was brought to the Mission from nearby San Miguelito Canyon in an aqueduct completed between 1804 and 1808. This open ditch was in use through the turn of the century, and portions of it are still extant along the hillside. Water must first have been conveyed to a reservoir above the Mission to the south, from where it could be released either to the agricultural fields or to the residential area. Several remnants of the hillside distribution system were encountered when Santa Clara Drive was developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Water used by Mission residents commonly passed first through a filter house.¹¹ At Mission Vieja, one covered channel below the filter house likely led down toward the cook house and the plaza *pilares* and *lavandería*. A second covered channel would have entered the quadrangle, serving another *pilar* located in the courtyard. A portion of this second channel was found underlying the 1802 church building, which it must predate. It likely continued on to the soldiers' residences.

Above the filter house, an open ditch carried water south to a small reservoir which served the mission's large walled garden. Completed in 1802, the garden was 183 m square (600 ft), surrounded by an adobe wall capped with *tejas* (Engelhardt 1932:18). The garden reservoir and wall are included in an 1883 sketch by Henry Chapman Ford.¹²

Of the numerous other facilities which would have surrounded the Mission, few locations are known. The kiln where *tejas* and *ladrillos* were fired was constructed in 1790 (Neuerburg 1987:8), built into the hillside southwest of the Mission, a location now identified by an apron of bloated and melted "wasters." Still unidentified

are the sites of the threshing floor, corralls, lime kiln, and grist mill. Also not located is the cemetery, with over 1,518 recorded burials (Engelhardt 1932:87).¹³

THE DEATH OF THE MISSION

This complex of residences, workshops, storerooms, aqueducts, and a church was brought down by the terrible earthquake of December 1812. Throughout California, that year was thereafter known as *el Año de los Temblores*. Hubert Howe Bancroft summarizes the event:

At Purisima several slight shocks between 7 and 8 a.m. on the 8th did no harm; but at 10:30 a.m. on the 21st the earth shook for four minutes so violently that it was difficult to stand. A brief examination showed the minister that the church walls had been thrown out of plumb; and half an hour after the first there came another more violent shock, which brought down the church and nearly all the adobe buildings. Several neophytes were wounded but not killed. A succession of light shocks followed this day and the next, and the work of destruction was completed by the rains that followed and the bursting of the water works. [Bancroft 1966:201]

Fr. Mariano Payeras provides additional details in a letter dated December 31, 1812:¹⁴

The extraordinary and horrible earthquake... completely ruined the church, destroyed its collateral, several statues and paintings, and spoiled the major part of its decorations. The vestments were not damaged as they were inside the drawers.

The building materials, some on the floor, and others (if the damage does not continue) after being carefully repaired, could serve not for dwellings, but for less hardy use that does not require so much safety.

One hundred houses of the neophytes and the [pozolera or community kitchen] made with walls an adobe and a half thick and roofed with tile, are unserviceable: even the adobe fence of the garden, though covered with tile, either fell or was knocked down in such a way that there is barely

enough material left to use in making replacements.

The furniture and possessions of the Mission also have suffered: some crushed, others destroyed and all damaged. Besides the bad weather and the heavy rain that fell subsequently, there was no opportunity to dig out or re-roof that which barely still stands.

Faced with the virtual decimation of his establishment, Fr. Payeras determined not to rebuild at this location. He petitioned to move the site of the Mission some 5 miles northeast to the mouth of Los Berros Canyon. On the same side of the river as El Camino Real, this new Mission site would not be cut off during high water and was closer to both Missions Santa Inés and San Luis Obispo (Payeras 1814). After 25 years in the valley, the Franciscans certainly also noted that this new site was protected from the strong afternoon winds and above the frequent marine fogs that plagued their original location. On April 23, 1813, the formal move took place.¹⁵

Everything of value was salvaged from the old site. Rescue of important items had begun immediately after the disaster, and now the site was raided for building materials: *tejas*, *ladrillos*, doors, lintels, posts, beams, and rafters. What had not previously fallen now rapidly deteriorated from exposure to the weather.

The site was not completely abandoned, however. When La Purísima was secularized in 1835, its inventory valued the site of Mission Vieja at \$373.50 (Engelhardt 1932:57). The garden with its mature trees had been maintained, along with the aqueduct from San Miguelito Canyon and perhaps some corrals. There must have been a small population of Mission Chumash serving as resident caretakers. In 1845 Rancho Mission Vieja was granted to Joaquin and José Antonio Carrillo, who already owned the Lompoc Rancho to the west. The Mission Vieja garden was still productive in 1853 as it is specifically mentioned by the Land Commissioners (Bancroft Library, Land Case File 61SD). A sketch map of

this period identifies three Indians living on the site: a man named Francisco resided in an adobe associated with the Mission, while two other men, Cecilio and Miguel, lived between the adobe and the irrigation ditch in *jacal* (grass and brush) houses; a *temescal* (sweat house) was nearby.¹⁶ Perhaps these men were the last occupants of the 1787 Chumash Mission village.

Rancho Vieja was formally mapped for the U.S. Surveyor General in 1864; the site of Mission Vieja ended up outside of its rancho boundaries, in the Lompoc grant. In 1874 the Lompoc Land Company purchased both the Lompoc and Mission Vieja ranchos for \$500,000. They had the land surveyed into plots for farms and grazing, with a 2-mile-square townsite reserved in the center of the valley. Plots were auctioned off, and eager settlers poured into the valley (O'Neil 1939:345-346).

Sketches and photographs of the site after the 1880s record its steady deterioration. Two small ranches built next to the ruins corralled livestock within the crumbling walls and used the quadrangle corners for barns. The *pozolera* appears to have been roofed for some utility, and the aqueduct system was maintained for irrigation.

By 1912, the 125th anniversary of the founding of the mission, Lompoc's Spanish past was still a visible entity at the southern edge of town. Some individuals recognized its historical importance to the community and organized a county-wide celebration to advocate preservation of the site for future generations. They didn't know that it would take 80 years to reach that goal.

NOTES

1. Details of the 1912 celebration are drawn from two newspaper accounts, *The Morning Press*, December 6, 1912, and *The Independent*, December 6, 1912; and from Engelhardt 1932:102-115.

2. Two grinding stones were said to have been salvaged from this construction; one is at La

Purissima State Historic Park (Clarence Ruth, personal communication, 1975).

3. *Lompoc Record*, August 27, 1959. There is no substantiation for the story that during this work skeletons were found on the tiled church floor "frozen in attitudes of horror" (Robert Lilly, personal communication, 1975). Contemporary newspaper accounts describing the road excavation through the church do not mention discovery of any human remains. Archaeologist Dr. James Deetz, who came up from UC Santa Barbara to inspect the site, also apparently did not raise any alarms. Perhaps related to this legend is the report that two skeletons were found in 1961 during construction of a nearby house (Mrs. H. Ingram, Block 136, Lot 10, in Costello 1975d).

4. The work was funded from the California Department of Parks and Recreation's History and Archaeology Grants Program, under the California Wildlife, Coastal, and Park Land Conservation Act of 1988. Rising real estate values were met by a supplementary grant of \$50,000 from Santa Barbara County and donation in property value of \$47,000 from the Signorelli family of Lompoc.

5. Project Director was Julia G. Costello, Ph.D.; Field Director was Roy Salls, Ph.D., who had replaced Colton as Director of the Lompoc Museum; and Lab Director was Linda Sehgal, M.A., of Lompoc. Juanita Centeno, assisted by José Castillo, represented local Chumash concerns. Most of the field work was performed on eight Saturdays (April 6 - June 1, 1991) by members of an archaeological field class from UCSB taught by Professor Michael Glassow. Additional work was completed by volunteer excavators on four Sundays during that same time period. The surveying and mapping work was done by M.K. Welch Surveys, Inc., of Santa Maria, who involved a second-semester surveying class from Allen Hancock Community College. Artist Karen Foster Wells produced the drawing reconstruction of the site. Jeremy Graves, Principal Planner, served as coordinator and liaison for the project.

6. The technical report (Costello 1993) discusses field methods and procedures and findings by unit, synthesizes the archaeological data by architectural feature, and presents management recommendations. Appendices include analyses of glass beads by Lester Ross, shell beads by Chester King, and faunal remains by Roy Salls, along with a summary of the artifact catalogue. Copies of the report are on file at the City of Lompoc, the Lompoc Museum, and the Central Coast Information Center of the California Archaeological Inventory at UCSB. All original field notes, photographs, and recovered artifacts are curated at the Lompoc Museum.

7. Sage advice on architectural details was generously provided by Dr. Norman Neuerburg and Edna Kimbro.

8. Made of adobe blocks surfaced with *ladrillos*, the top of the *brasero* lay ca. 55 cm above the floor. Similar structures have been found in excavations at Missions San Buenaventura (Hastings 1975:126), Soledad (Farnsworth 1987:358-360), Santa Inés (Costello 1989:35), and San Antonio (Robert Hoover, personal communication, 1980).

9. *Fuente* is used to describe a fountain, present at many California missions to aerate piped water and for decoration. A *pilar* is the water basin of a fountain, and is used here as a more conservative term. In Spanish Central America, the *pilar* is located in the central plaza and often has washing areas built into it, incorporating *lavandería* activities.

10. The soft, Roman cement made by the Spanish could be strengthened with additives to form a hydraulic cement, *pozzolana* (Costello 1989:78-79). The version utilizing ground terracota fragments, which colors it pink, is popularly known as *coccio pesto* ("potsherd, pounded") (Edna Kimbro and Norman Neuerburg, personal communications, 1993).

11. Filter houses were commonly used to clean ditched waters before they were used for domestic

purposes. Remains of these structures have been found at the second site of La Purísima (Hageman and Ewing 1980:179), at Mission San Buenaventura (Greenwood and Gessler 1968), and at Mission San Antonio where it has been misidentified as a *baño*. Large stone footings reported during construction of two houses on the north side of Santa Clara Drive could belong to the filter house (Costello 1977a).

12. Judge Reed reported that a Mr. Barker, whose house burned down in 1906, used the old Mission water system to irrigate his land. Reed also remembered tracing the route of the old aqueduct to ca. 150 feet above Whistler dam on San Miguelito Creek and remembered the "settling pond" (garden reservoir) behind the Veterans Memorial building (personal communication to J. Costello, 1975).

13. Lompoc historian and archaeologist Clarence "Pop" Ruth, thought that the Mission graveyard was "up above the Mission on the hill." He also related that west of the Veterans building, where an old wooden building used to stand, a water main installation encountered a burial with trade beads (personal communication, 1975; see also Footnote 2). The cemetery might have been on the north side of the plaza, although this would be unusual.

14. (Payeras 1812). This version of the letter was translated for the author by Ruth Adams in 1977; the letter has also been translated by Engelhardt (1932:30-31).

15. The move is discussed in Payeras' letter of 1814. For additional motives, note his complaints of the weather (Engelhardt 1932:19); these are verified by local residents.

16. Map by J.P. Harrington identifying "Mid-Nineteenth Century Indian structures at La Purísima Vieja." Copy provided by Dr. John Johnson, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History.

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