

Context:

Spanish exploration of west coast of Canada 18th-century

Citation:

Doe, Nick, Who named Saturna Island? *SHALE* 18, pp.18–30, April 2008.

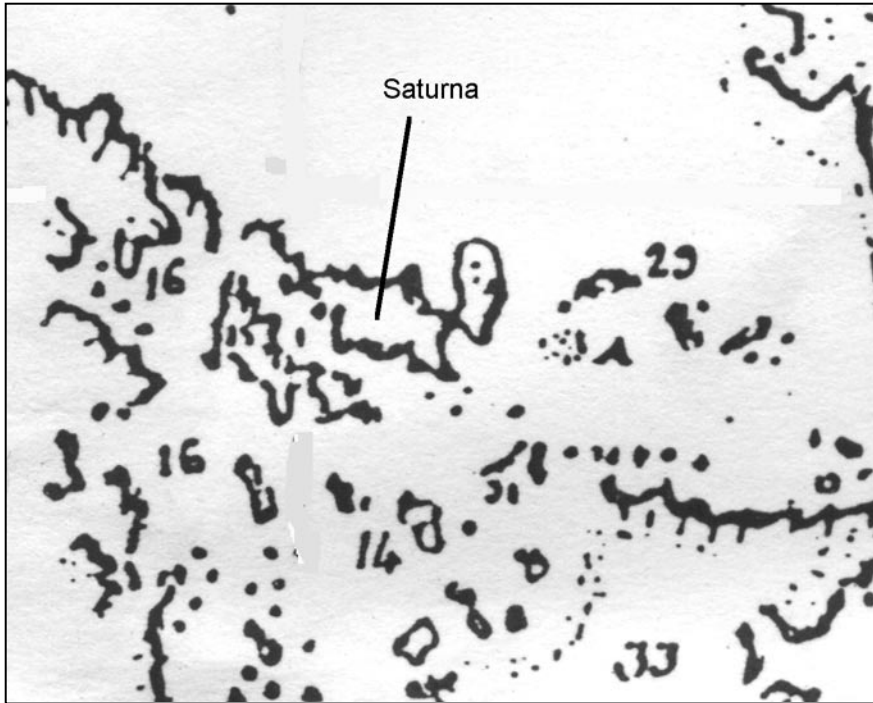
Copyright restrictions:

Copyright © 2011: Gabriola Historical & Museum Society.  
For reproduction permission e-mail: [nickdoe@island.net](mailto:nickdoe@island.net)

Errors and omissions:

Date posted:

May 2, 2011.



14: *Boca de Canal de Lopez* [Entrance to the Haro Strait]

15: *Islas de Zallas (plural)* [Pender Island]

16: *Bocas de Bazan* [Satellite Channel, Ganges Harbour...]

29: ? a mistake; used for *Seno de Garzon* [Bellingham Bay]

33: *Archipiélagos de San Juan y Bocas de Orcasitas*

34: *Punta del San Gil è Islas de Lemos* [Waldron Island]

It is commonly thought that Saturna Island was named by Spanish explorer Narváez in 1791; yet, although Pender Island (key 15) is named on Narváez's chart, Saturna Island is not.

Hannold Library, California

## Who named Saturna Island?

by Nick Doe

Judging by responses you get if you Google “Saturna Island”, there’s no doubt in most people’s minds that the island was named after the schooner *SANTA SATURNINA*,<sup>1</sup> which visited the Gulf Islands, including Gabriola, in June 1791. Only a few sites however venture an opinion as to who actually bestowed the name. The usual suspect is José María Narváez, but even though he often captained the schooner, his naval colleague, Juan Pantoja, is probably a better choice<sup>2</sup> because he was commander of the 1791 expedition, and he therefore

retained the right—according to that strange European custom—to give places names.<sup>3</sup> If we delve deeper into this story however, ignoring the many unreliable third-hand sources, we find that the naming of Saturna Island has a little more to it than meets the eye. It is quite possible that *neither* Narváez *nor* Pantoja was the true culprit.

### The Eliza expedition

Exploration of the Strait of Georgia by the Spanish navy began in earnest with the expedition of 1791 lead by Francisco de

<sup>1</sup> “Saturnina” is Spanish, “Saturna” is Latin.

<sup>2</sup> Henry R. Wagner, *The Cartography of the Northwest Coast of America to the Year 1800*, Volume II, p.415, Berkeley, 1937.

<sup>3</sup> Indian names for islands are rare, perhaps because when only canoes are used for transport, the fact that a place is an island is of little consequence. Saturna is home to the Tsawout and Tseycum First Nations.

Eliza, the then commandant of the Spanish naval post at Nootka. Eliza set sail from Nootka on May 4 in the SAN CARLOS, a packetboat (essentially an unarmed frigate used for carrying cargo). With him as first pilot, he had Juan Pantoja, and as second pilot José Antonio Verdía. The SAN CARLOS was accompanied by the small schooner SANTA SATURNINA<sup>4</sup> under the command of Narváez, who also had with him on board the *pilotín* Juan Carrasco.<sup>5</sup>

After first exploring the west coast of Vancouver Island, Eliza anchored in the present-day Esquimalt Harbour and prepared to examine the *Canal de López de Haro*, the strait that now separates the Canadian Gulf Islands from the San Juan Islands.

The SAN CARLOS was too big to enter the narrow channels, bays, and inlets around the southeastern tip of Vancouver Island, and so the job was left to the SANTA SATURNINA and the longboat of the SAN CARLOS.<sup>6</sup>

On May 31, Verdía made a short exploratory trip in the Haro Strait in the longboat alone, but was forced to abandon his work when opposed by large numbers of Indians who clearly did not approve of uninvited strangers coming into their territory. For

<sup>4</sup> The schooner's build history is confused, but it was likely named by Eliza at Nootka. See Derek Pethick, *First Approaches to the Northwest Coast*, p.215, Douglas & McIntyre, 1976.

<sup>5</sup> "Pilot" is a common but inadequate translation of *piloto*. In English, the term "captain" can refer to a rank, role, or both. In Spanish, *piloto* was a rank (two classes) and a *piloto*, and more junior *pilotín*, could perform the role of captain (*commandante*), master, or master's mate depending on circumstances and size of vessel. A *pilotín* performing a more senior duty became a "brevet pilot".

<sup>6</sup> The schooner had a crew of about 22, but these were supplemented by extra men from the packetboat when engaged in exploration. The longboat could carry about 14 people. Tomás Bartroli, *Genesis of Vancouver City*, pp.30–2, Marco Polo, 1997.

safety's sake, it was therefore decided that the longboat would henceforth travel only in the company of the SANTA SATURNINA.<sup>7</sup>

## Pantoja expedition

There ensued two expeditions into the Strait of Georgia involving both the longboat and the schooner. The first, June 14–24 was led by Pantoja, and the second, July 1<sup>8</sup>–22 by Narváez. It was this first expedition in June that visited Saturna Island for, as far as we know, the first time by Europeans.

Given the topic of this article, we should first establish that it definitely was Pantoja who was in charge, and then who was with him. All the words in brackets [] in the following quotes are my editorial comment.

### Leadership

Eliza himself says:

On the 14th [of June], having provided the schooner with water, wood and food, I issued an order to explore the Canal de Lopez de Haro, and that the task might be completed as quickly as possible I dispatched the armed longboat in her company under the command of Second Pilot Don Juan Pantoja.<sup>9</sup>

This doesn't establish Pantoja's overall command at all because it could easily be read as though Eliza was talking about just command of the longboat. Rather irritatingly, Eliza re-inforces this ambiguity

<sup>7</sup> Henry W. Wagner, *Spanish Explorations in the Strait of Juan de Fuca*, p.173, AMS Press: New York, 1933. Pantoja also makes the point that using two vessels could speed up reconnaissance by simultaneously exploring both sides of a channel. This idea didn't work too well, p.174, because the longboat was too small to carry supplies in the event of it being separated and that the geography of the area was "indescribably" complex.

<sup>8</sup> Pantoja says June 30, Eliza and Carrasco, July 1.

<sup>9</sup> Wagner, *Spanish Explorations...*, p.149.

by saying of the second expedition, of which Narváez was in charge:

[On] July 1 dispatched the schooner and the armed longboat under the command of Second Pilot Don José Verdía.<sup>10</sup>

Here he *is* referring to command of the longboat, not the expedition as a whole.<sup>11</sup>

Pantoja however comes to our rescue when he says of the first expedition:

June 14 the commander [Eliza] ordered the longboat to be fully armed and the schooner to be supplied with twenty-five shots for the six cannon and the swivel guns she carried. He manned them together with thirty sailors and eight able-bodied and spirited soldiers of the Volunteers of Catalonia. The command he delivered to me with the task of examining carefully whatever there was in the Canal de Lopez de Aro and to punish the Indians in case they came back or tried to attack us as they had done Don José Verdía.<sup>12</sup>

He later adds comments such as:

It [Bedwell Harbour] is situated at the southernmost part of the *Isla de Sayas* [Pender Island] and I named it “Punta (Puerto) de San Antonio”.<sup>13</sup>

Only the commander had the right to name places. After anchoring within sight of the SAN CARLOS at the end of the expedition (the crews were exhausted from so much rowing), Pantoja says:

At 7 the boat of the packetboat came alongside with an order from the commander

[Eliza] to come in it immediately to tell him what had been found. This I did at 8:45.<sup>14</sup>

He, rather than some other officer, was fetched because he was the leader. All of these snippets, and there are one or two more, confirm that, although the young pilots undoubtedly co-operated, it was Pantoja who was in charge on this occasion.

### **Membership**

Who went with Pantoja is not clear. Two of the other officers did because Pantoja talks about “his companions” (plural):

...I went on board the schooner to help my companions in putting down the many marks, bearings and elevations which had to be made<sup>15</sup>

but it couldn't have been all three as that would have left Eliza with no support at all at a time when he was feeling ill.<sup>16</sup> There had to be someone who came out in the boat of the SAN CARLOS to summon Pantoja to the ship at the end of the expedition. Pantoja also remarks that after he had returned to the SAN CARLOS in its small boat “...on the following day [25th] the schooner came up and the two pilots having come aboard...”.<sup>17</sup>

Carrasco, the *pilotín*, solves half the mystery by saying (more or less) that he was a member of the expedition:

<sup>14</sup> Wagner, *Spanish Explorations...*, p.177.

<sup>15</sup> Wagner, *Spanish Explorations...*, p.174.

<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, Jim McDowell, *José Narváez—the Forgotten Explorer*, p.53, The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1998, says “From June 14 to 24, Pantoja took command of the schooner and longboat and explored the southern Gulf Islands, assisted by Narváez, Carrasco and Verdía”. I can find no basis for this assertion that all four officers took part.

<sup>17</sup> This doesn't rule out the possibility that an officer had returned with Pantoja in the boat from the SAN CARLOS the previous evening, but it seems unlikely.

<sup>10</sup> Wagner, *Spanish Explorations...*, p.151.

<sup>11</sup> Pantoja makes it clear that Narváez was both captain of the schooner and in overall command of the expedition. He also confirms that Verdía went in the longboat. Wagner, *Spanish Explorations...*, p.178.

<sup>12</sup> Wagner, *Spanish Explorations...*, p.172.

<sup>13</sup> Wagner, *Spanish Explorations...*, p.175.



14: *Boca del Canal de Lopez de Haro é Islas de Agualló* [Entrance to the Haro Strait and Moresby, Stuart, and adjacent islands]

15: *Isla de Zayas (singular)* [Pender Island]

16: *Bocas de Bazan* [Satellite Channel, Ganges Harbour...]

33: *Archipiélago de San Juan y Bocas de Orcasitas*

34: *Puntas de San Gil é Islas de Lemos* [Point Doughty? and Waldron Island]

Pantoja's chart of the area around Saturna Island. There is a key on the right. Again Pender Island (15) is named but Saturna Island to the northeast is not.

Bancroft Library, California

On the 14th we set out to explore the arm to the northeast of the Canal de Lopez de Haro and were employed in this task until the 25th when we reached the place where the commander was.<sup>18</sup>

My *guess* is that the other officer was Narváez and not Verdía because Narváez was usually in command of the schooner, but there is, as far as I can see, no statement in the historical records that pins this down. Well-known historian Warren Cook, for example, thought the expedition included Verdía, but BC's resident expert, marine historian John Crosse, had little doubt that it was the more senior Narváez who was there.<sup>19</sup>

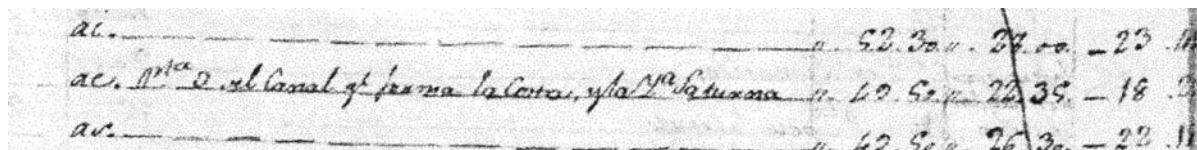
<sup>18</sup> Wagner, *Spanish Explorations...*, pp.200-1.

<sup>19</sup> Cook says: "After the schooner arrived [on the 11th] Verdía set out a second time". *Food Tide of*

### On-the-spot naming?

Regardless of who was on the Pantoja expedition there is no doubt that it was on the occasion of the expedition's visit to the shores of Saturna Island in June 1791 that the island received its name. Right? Well, actually, no. There is nothing in the extant documentation, and there is nothing in either of the two small charts that Narváez and Pantoja produced, to indicate this. Saturna is shown together with Mayne and Samuel Islands in the charts as a single island, a reasonable error, but no name is attached to either the whole island or to any part of it in either chart. Moreover, a third chart drawn up by Gonzalo López de Haro in January

*Empire*, p.304, Yale University Press, 1973. John Crosse, *In the Wake of Narváez*, unpublished manuscript 2nd draft, p.26, Feb. 2003.



The earliest known reference to Saturna Island by that name (*Y<sup>a</sup> Saturna*, not *Saturnina*) is in the notebook used by Alcalá Galiano to construct his charts. It dates from September 1792.

Courtesy MUSEO NAVAL, Madrid

1792, based on information from Nootka, also fails to give a name to the island.<sup>20</sup>

If this were not enough to cast doubt on whether Pantoja named Saturna Island in June 1791, there are in the charts two pieces of evidence that count against any such proposition. Pantoja did indeed honour the SANTA SATURNINA. In fact, he did it twice, but not by naming the island. While exploring Clayoquot Sound on Vancouver Island a little earlier in the year, he had named Holmes Inlet on the north side of Flores Island, *Boca de Santa Saturnina*.<sup>21</sup> And as can be seen in the small charts of both Pantoja and Narváez, the present day Orcas Island derives its name from *Bocas de Orcasitas*, LA [H]ORCASITAS being another name for the SANTA SATURNINA.<sup>22</sup>

So...could there be something wrong with the conventional wisdom?

## Isla Saturna

Let's start with the earliest known reference to the island<sup>23</sup> as Saturna Island. Until a few weeks ago, I would have said that this was

<sup>20</sup> Haro's chart is shown in *SHALE* 13, p.15.

<sup>21</sup> Map 116 in *Historical Atlas of British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest* by Derek Hayes.

<sup>22</sup> Wagner, *Spanish Explorations...*, p.142.

<sup>23</sup> Prior to 1858, Mayne and Saturna Islands were always charted as one island, although the Hudson Bay Company learned there were two *circa* 1852.

in 1849 when the British Navy issued the first edition of Admiralty Chart #1917. A copy is shown in *SHALE* 3, on page 9. But in discussing this with a few friends, it was quickly pointed out to me that the name *Isla de Saturna* appears much earlier in a sketch map by Dionisio Alcalá Galiano.<sup>24</sup> A copy of this is shown in *SHALE* 14, also on page 9.<sup>25</sup> Just to make absolutely sure the “*Saturna*” was for real, and not an abbreviation for “*Saturnina*”, I checked in Galiano's notebook, and sure enough there it was—*Isla Saturna*.<sup>26</sup>

We should add to this for future reference that the sketch map and the notes from which it was constructed would have been worked on by Galiano at Nootka in September 1792—the map itself is dated June 5 to August 31. As far as I can see, Galiano does not use the name *Isla Saturna* (or for that matter the name of many other nearby places) in notes<sup>27</sup> and the sketch<sup>28</sup> he made when the Island was within his sight on June 14, 1792.

<sup>24</sup> Independently by Robin Inglis and John Black.

<sup>25</sup> Also Map 127 in Hayes, *Historical Atlas...*

<sup>26</sup> MUSEO NAVAL ms288 f.87 verso. *Isla* (island) was commonly written in the 18th century *Ysla* or just *Y<sup>a</sup>*.

<sup>27</sup> John Kendrick, *The voyage of Sutil and Mexicana* 1792, p.114, Arthur H. Clark, 1991. Crosse, p.116.

<sup>28</sup> MUSEO NAVAL ms2456, Dia 14, Numero 7.

## The gap

All that now remains to be done is to explain on what basis Galiano used the name *Isla Saturna*. Did he make the name up; was it agreed to in discussions, and if so with whom; or is there an earlier documented use of the name?

As everybody who can Google knows, Galiano almost certainly did not pull the name out of thin air. As everybody knows, East Point on Saturna Island is named on the famous *Carta que comprehende...* drawn up by Juan Carrasco in San Blas in early 1792. The annotation is: *Punta y Bajo de Santa Saturnina* [Point and Reef of...]. It can be seen in *SHALE* 3, on page 8. What is especially interesting about this annotation however—and this is definitely not something everybody knows—is that it does not appear on the copy of the *Carta que comprehende...* that Galiano carried with him in 1792.

## Carta que comprehende...

The “chart that details...”, sometimes known as the Eliza chart, is a splendid piece of work containing much fascinating detail. It summarizes all of the Spanish discoveries in the waters around southern Vancouver Island up to the end of the 1791 season. The copy that is almost invariably reproduced and exhibited nowadays has been watercoloured and was probably meant to be a significant contribution to the records of the Malaspina expedition. The history of this chart is obviously of some relevance to our present enquiries.

After the Eliza expedition had finished its surveying in the Strait of Georgia, the two ships, SAN CARLOS and SANTA SATURNINA, attempted to make their way back to Nootka, but, as anticipated, the schooner was unable to make any progress northward and was

forced to turn and head south for California. Before the separation, Eliza had put Carrasco in charge of the schooner because he needed Narváez to work on the charts at Nootka.<sup>29</sup>

The SAN CARLOS reached Nootka with Eliza, Narváez, Verdía, and Pantoja on August 29, 1791 (according to Pantoja). They then spent the next month or so working on the charts. This would have involved re-orienting each field sketch that used magnetic rather than geographic north; re-scaling the field sketches to a common standard; attempting to reconcile distances determined by dead reckoning with those determined by astronomical measurement of latitude and longitude; and agreeing on names for places.<sup>30</sup>

All of this work was completed by mid-October, and Pantoja was then directed to take the charts back to San Blas:

<sup>29</sup> Eliza, July 25, 1791, from Wagner pp.152-3: "That same day I transferred the captain of the schooner, Don Jose Narvaez to the packetboat, bestowing the command of her to the Second Pilot Don Juan Carrasco, in the belief that the schooner could not reach Nuca except by some fortuitous circumstance, as she is extremely small, and I had pressing need of Narvaez to make the plans [at Nootka]." Pantoja, July 1791, from Wagner p.181: "The commander also ordered the second pilot, Jose Maria Narvaez, to deliver the command of the schooner to his second, pilotin and Brevet Second Pilot, Don Juan Carrasco, and to transfer himself to the packetboat, so that in case the schooner could not reach Noca he could become first pilot of the frigate Concepcion, to which position he had been assigned as the proper holder of it had gone to San Blas in the sloop Princesa Real, and that he might assist also in finishing the many charts which have to be made [at Nootka]."

<sup>30</sup> Nick Doe, *Some anomalies in a Spanish chart of Vancouver Island, 1791*, Lighthouse, Journal of the Canadian Hydrographic Association, 56, pp.7–20, Fall 1997.

October 14 the labor of taking ballast and water was finished and on the 15th the commander [Eliza] ordered our Don Ramon to comply with his duty and embark [on the SAN CARLOS]. Our three pilots Don Jose Maria Narvaez, Don Antonio Verdía and I, having finished the many charts which had to be made, Don Francisco Eliza delivered them to our commander, well sealed and in good condition in some tin tubes..... The vessel [sailing from Nootka to San Blas] has no other pilot than me.<sup>31</sup>

Meanwhile, Carrasco had managed to struggle back to California reaching Monterey on September 15. A day later, he met with Alejandro Malaspina. Malaspina's account of the meeting is interesting because it dispels any notion that Carrasco, who was a junior pilot, could have later worked on the *Carta que comprehende...* prior to the arrival of the SAN CARLOS from Nootka. Malaspina says:

At midday on the 16th we had the pleasure of seeing the appearance near the harbour of a Spanish schooner, which by two o'clock had already anchored near the corvettes [DESCUBIERTA and ATREVIDA]. It was the schooner SANTA SATURNINA from the Department of San Blas which, in company with the snow SAN CARLOS, and under the orders of Teniente de Navío [Senior Lieutenant] Francisco Eliza, had left Nootka to continue surveying the coast to the north and the south. The winds had obliged both ships to begin their work from Juan de Fuca Strait, where they spent the whole

<sup>31</sup> Pantoja, October 1791, Wagner pp.195-6. McDowell, *José Narváez...*, p.63, implies that Narváez also sailed south to San Blas with Pantoja in the fall of 1791, but this is demonstrably untrue. Eliza for sure, and very probably Narváez, and maybe Verdía did not leave for San Blas until July 1792 aboard the CONCEPCIÓN. The SANTA SATURNINA left San Blas for San Francisco in June 1792 with Juan Carrasco and returned to Nootka in December 1792 under the command of Lopez de Haro. Cook, *Flood Tide...*, p.387.

summer.... After finally emerging [from the Juan de Fuca Strait] to return to Nootka, the ships had become separated. The schooner, after struggling in vain for many days to reach the necessary latitude, had been forced for want of water to bear away and make for Monterey Harbour. The lack of log books and the poor skills of Pilotín Carrasco, who was in command, prevented us from acquiring all the information we needed to include these parts, so interesting to geography, to our own work in this area, although one could imagine that the lack of reliable observations and bearings, as the *pilotín* himself stated, was bound to contribute greatly to inaccuracy, even after Teniente de Navío Eliza submitted the systematic summary of these surveys.<sup>32</sup>

Carrasco reached San Blas on November 9 and Pantoja on December 22.

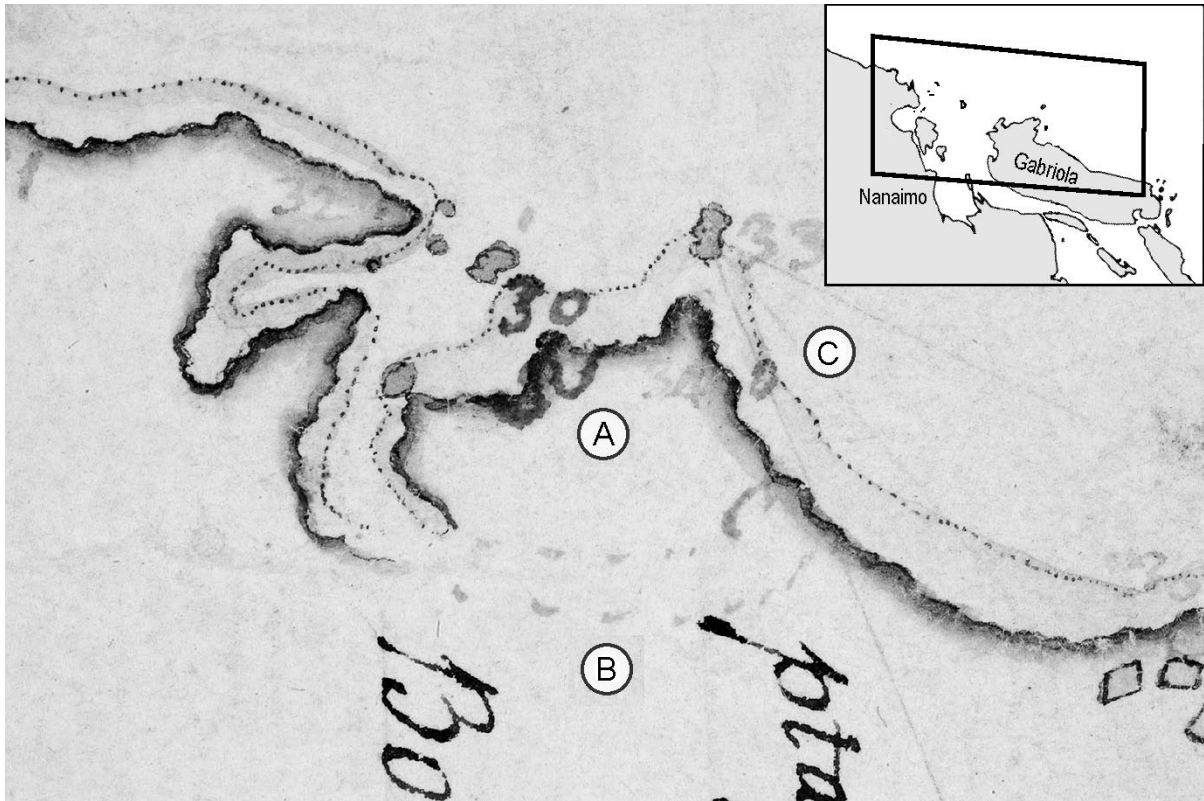
Now we know that Pantoja did not bring with him the final version of the *Carta que comprehende...* because the handwriting on the chart is that of Carrasco. We also know—just to back up Malaspina's evidence—that the final version was not prepared by Carrasco prior to Pantoja's arrival. Pantoja, writing to his friend, José de Prados y Salbatierra, from San Blas on December 29, 1791, proudly mentions his naming of Waldron Island and a near-by point in honour of the Viceroy of Perú, Francisco Gil de Taboada y Lemos,<sup>33</sup> yet neither name is on Carrasco's final version of the *Carta que comprehende...*

What we don't know is what exactly Pantoja brought with him from Nootka. The package has been lost. It is very commonly assumed that all Carrasco did was to make a "fair copy" of the largest of the charts, but I

<sup>32</sup> *The Malaspina Expedition, 1789–1794, Journal of the Voyage*, pp.209–210, Hakluyt Society, 2003.

<sup>33</sup> Wagner, *Spanish Explorations...*, p.198. Pantoja was stationed in Perú from 1770–7.





MUSEO NAVAL, Madrid, 3-E-11

Part of the “rough copy” of the *Carta que comprehende...* It shows the area in the insert top right including Departure Bay, Newcastle and Protection Islands (as a peninsula), the Nanaimo Harbour (*Boca de Wenthuisen*), and the northwest and northeast sides of Gabriola Island—“33” marks Entrance Island and the faint “34” is Orlebar (Berry) Point.

This version of the chart was at one time marked up in black ink, but this has since faded to brown, and is in places almost invisible and easily overlooked. Three markings are of special interest here. “A” shows that someone has corrected the outline of the Twin Beaches peninsula “30” to more clearly show Taylor and Pilot Bays; “B” shows dashed lines (a channel?) between the Northumberland Channel and Lock Bay on the northeast side of Gabriola; and “C” marks a rocky islet near Leboeuf Bay. Nobody but Galiano could have made these marks. His *Cala del Descanso* was Pilot Bay on the northeast side of Twin Beaches; he made a small boat trip into the Northumberland Channel but evidently not far enough to recognize False or Dodd Narrows; and the rocky islet, known locally as Submarine Island, may be where Captain Vancouver landed, a possibility Galiano might have discussed with the British captain (*SHALE* 14, pp.2–9).

disagree. Although Carrasco was far too junior to be making changes to the chart, his boss, Juan Francisco Bodega y Quadra, the overall commander of the Department of San Blas was not. The argument that Bodega y Quadra did in fact make changes to the names of places—although probably

not to the outlines of coasts—is made at length in an earlier *SHALE* article.<sup>34</sup>

It would seem to me that there is a good chance that the annotation *Punta y Bajo de Santa Saturnina* was added by Bodega. But why then did Galiano call it *Isla Saturna* and

<sup>34</sup> *SHALE* 13, pp.7–38.

not *Isla Saturnina*? A clue lies in the annotations on the “rough copy” of the *Carta que comprehende...* and a chart by Bodega himself.

### A second *Carta...*

There are three known copies in manuscript form of the *Carta que comprehende...* that date back to the 18th century. There is Carrasco’s “fair copy”, the one that is always shown in modern exhibitions (Museo Naval 3-E-1); what appears to be an exact copy but more roughly finished and in poorer condition (Museo Naval 3-E-11); and a third, now in the Library of Congress,<sup>35</sup> prepared by an unknown Spanish naval officer in 1799.<sup>36</sup> This third one is a copy of the “fair copy” and was not made in North America and so can be dropped from further consideration.

The relationship between the two earlier Museo Naval copies engaged the attention of the maritime historian John Crosse for several years. His opinion in the early days of his research was that the neglected and overlooked “rough copy” was in fact the long-sought-for chart that was sent down to San Blas from Nootka by Eliza, so when he heard that I was travelling to Madrid in 2002, he urged me to go take a look at it. Which I did. The wonderfully helpful staff pulled the chart from its storage place and, rather puzzled at my interest,<sup>37</sup> laid it out for my inspection.

To my delight, I could see that at sometime in the distant past, somebody had annotated the copy with an ink that had almost

<sup>35</sup> Map 117 in Hayes, *Historical Atlas...*. A copy of this copy is held in the BC Archives.

<sup>36</sup> Crosse, *In the Wake...*, pp.137–140, p.202.

<sup>37</sup> It was their opinion that it was probably a copy of the “fair copy” made in preparation for engraving.

completely faded and that these annotations could not have been in Spain because they showed an awareness of the geography of Gabriola that only someone who had been there could have had. John and I compared notes on my return and after examining several other scarcely visible markings, we came to the inescapable conclusion that the “rough copy” must have been the chart that Galiano and Valdes had carried with them around Vancouver Island in 1792.<sup>38</sup>

This discovery helps solve the Saturna problem in two ways. First, it shows that at the time Galiano had Saturna in his sight, he did not have with him the version of the chart that gave names to locations on the island. And secondly, it is clear that Galiano intended to add further names of his own to significant places on the east coast of Vancouver Island.

### Differences

Before finishing the story, let me briefly list for the record some of the differences between the various early charts of the southern end of the Strait of Georgia. Many of these reinforce the notion that changes to placenames were made in San Blas.

Pender Island was named *Isla de Zayas* by Pantoja after his colleague, the pilot Juan Martínez y Zayas. Narváez uses the phonetically equivalent spelling *Sallas*. On both of Carrasco’s copies however, Pender is called *Isla de San Eusebio*.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Other clues include the note *Y.<sup>s</sup> bajas y anegadas* (low-lying and waterlogged islands) at the Fraser estuary; a faint outline of Howe Sound obtained from Vancouver; and *Islas Morros* (Burrows and Allan Islands off Fidalgo Island), which are only mentioned in Galiano’s narrative.

<sup>39</sup> Wagner, *Cartography...*, p.499 says Eliza made the change, but Pantoja, who didn’t know about it says all naming “we [pilots] gave...in the presence of the commander, chief of the expedition [Eliza]”.



Top: Part of the “fair copy” of the *Carta que comprehende...* showing the Gulf Islands (top left), Vancouver Island (bottom left), and the mainland (right). “A” is just north of Saturna Island, which is not named, but the inscription to the right includes *Punta de Santa Saturnina*.

Bottom: The “rough copy” of the same area. “A” is missing, but there is an addition “B” *Seno de Gaston*”, which is Bellingham Bay. Gridlines may have been put there by whoever drafted the chart, or they may have been added later by somebody copying the chart.

The detail in the charts is so nearly identical they must have been drawn by the same person.

Courtesy MUSEO NAVAL, Madrid



Barely visible faded ink markings on the “rough copy” show that Galiano intended to name two points on Galiano Island, *Punta Sutil* and *Punta Mexicana*. He changed his mind (the entries have been crossed out), probably because they are insignificant—they have no modern names. They show however that Galiano intended right from the start to add placenames to the chart.

Carrasco, who drafted the chart, did not know how to spell ‘Porlier’ . He likely did not know who he was, and from the tone of Galiano’s comments one could infer that he did not know either. Antonio Porlier was in fact a friend of the Bodega y Quadra family.



Detail in the “rough copy” around East Point on Saturna and Tumbo Island. Galiano has annotated the chart *Sucia* (centre left) and immediately above it what might be *Y<sup>e</sup>* (*Sat?*)*urna* although it is hard to read.

Pantoja named *Puerto de San Antonio* (Bedwell Harbour), and it appears as such on Carrasco’s charts, even though it is not on the earlier ones.

*Seno de Gaston* (Bellingham Bay) appears on all charts except Carrasco’s fair copy.

*Bocas de Orcasitas* is *Horcasitas* on the fair copy. In Pantoja and Narváez’s charts, the name refers to the north end of Haro Strait, but in Carrasco’s charts, the name applies to the south end of the Middle Channel between San Juan and Lopez Islands.

*Punta de San Gil*<sup>40</sup> is not on Carrasco’s charts but appears on Pantoja and Narváez’s. Pantoja mentions the name in a letter in December 1791, clearly at the time unaware that it was not going to be on Carrasco’s charts.

*Isla Lemos* (Waldron Island) is on Pantoja’s chart but none of the others. Again, Pantoja clearly thought this name had been accepted. Waldron Island is however included in Carrasco’s *Islas de Moraleja* and perhaps significantly, José de Moraleda, a pilot, served under the Viceroy of Perú, Francisco Gil y Lemos. Bodega was born in Perú.

*Islas Aguallo* (Stuart and lesser islands at the north end of Haro Strait) on Pantoja’s chart was moved to Barnes and Clark Islands in Rosario Strait in Carrasco’s versions.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Wagner says this is Nob Point, but I can’t find that name on a modern chart. Could it be Point Doughty on Orcas Island? He also says, *Cartography...*, p.359 this is *Punta de San Felix* on a chart by Lopez de Haro, 1792, but I don’t see it.

<sup>41</sup> In addition to these placename differences, there is a scale difference. The longitude scale of the rough copy is correct, but there is an error in the fair copy—17°W is 30' too far west of San Blas.

## Just one more Spanish chart

So far, what we have then is no evidence that Saturna Island was named by José Narváez, Juan Pantoja, or Francisco Eliza; circumstantial evidence that East Point on Saturna was named *Punta Santa Saturnina* by Juan Francisco Bodega; and definite evidence that the name *Isla Saturna* was used by Dionisio Alcalá Galiano. Now there is one more observation that we can add to this.

While meeting at Nootka in the late summer of 1792, Bodega and Joseph Baker drew up charts of Vancouver Island that combined the discoveries to date of the Spanish and British navies.<sup>42</sup> In neither the Spanish nor British version of the chart does Bodega name Saturna Island, but in both charts, East Point on Saturna is called *Punta de Santa Saturnina*.<sup>43</sup> Proof enough I would say that the contraction to *Saturna* was an initiative of Galiano alone, and not something that he had agreed to do with Bodega in San Blas.<sup>44</sup> Why did he do it? That I'm afraid, is something you'd have to ask him.

## Wrap-up

Since I seldom write about Saturna Island and have almost completely neglected

<sup>42</sup> Maps 133 and 147 in *Historical Atlas of British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest* by Derek Hayes.

<sup>43</sup> Another interesting placename on the Spanish chart is *Boca de Bellingames?* for Bellingham Bay. Was this a concession by Bodega or a result of the Spanish name *Seno de Gaston* not being on Carrasco's fair copy?

<sup>44</sup> We can't rule out the possibility that Galiano mistakenly recollected *Saturnina* as being *Saturna* but it seems unlikely because he uses *Saturnina* in his narrative and the schooner's name appears in the title of the *Carta que comprehende....* He was probably not familiar with the small vessel and its history.

Mayne Island, let me add a note on the post-Spanish history of the names.

The name "Saturna" first appears on a British Admiralty Chart in 1849 where it is applied to a combination of Mayne, Samuel, and Saturna Islands. A Hudson's Bay Company chart drawn up *circa* 1852 however shows Samuel and Saturna as two islands with the name "Saturna Islands" (plural). Pender and Mayne Islands are called "Halliday Island".<sup>45</sup> The modern names for all four islands—Saturna, Samuel, Mayne, and Pender—came in 1858 as a result of the survey of George Richards of the British navy.

Anything more would require me to Google, and we all know how dangerous that can be.

## Acknowledgments

I would like to thank staff of the Museo Naval for undertaking the difficult task of photographing faded ink marks; Robin Inglis for his help in obtaining access to the charts in Madrid; John Black at the Malaspina Research Centre for his interest; Richard MacKenzie of the Vancouver Maritime Museum for the original question; the late Bruce Ward of the BC Map Society; Derek Hayes for his interest and help; and the late John Crosse with whom I had many interesting discussions. John was an avid investigator of BC's Spanish history, and there is no doubt that he would not have agreed with everything I have written, and it's too bad he is no longer with us. ◇

<sup>45</sup> Combining Mayne and Pender Islands is a curious error given that it was known that the islands are separate. A Russian chart from HBC sources at about the same time combines Saturna, Samuel, and Mayne Islands, but leaves Pender Island alone (*SHALE* 3, p.15).