

# California Research Guide

Prepared by the *California State Genealogical Alliance*

**Named for Calafia, Queen of the beautiful black Amazons, created by Garcia Rodriguez de Montalvo in Las Sergas de Esplandian (The Adventures of Esplandian), abt. 1510**

*This research guide is a work in progress. Users are invited to submit items for inclusion in either the main guide or on the county pages. Please submit items and comments to webmanager at csga.com . The main section of this guide provides a general overview of records created in California and directs you to those held, transcribed, abstracted or indexed at the state or regional level. For information on specific county records click on the county you are looking for. Please also note that hot links are limited to member societies, sponsors and government agencies. All genealogical and historical societies, associations, clubs and web-based non-profit organizations are invited to join CSGA. Profit based organizations that would like to be hot-linked from this research guide are invited to contact webmanager at csga.com for more information.*

## **A Short History of the settling of California**

California was first settled by aborigines about 13000 BC. Prior to the Gold Rush California had more Native Americans than all other states combined. During the 1500's Cabrillo discovered Alta California and Drake landed on the coast of California, but it was not until 1769 that Junipero Serra established the first California mission. Additional Missions and four Presidios for their protection soon followed.

In 1777 the first pueblo was established at San Jose. Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Angeles del Río de Porciúncula [Los Angeles] was established in 1781 with more than half the founding families being African-American. Today Los Angeles has more people of Mexican Ancestry than any other urban area outside of Mexico. The Russians laid their claim to Northern California with the establishment of Fort Ross in 1812.

With the declaration of Mexican Independence in 1821, California was considered the northern most province. In 1841 the first overland settlers from the US arrived. They coexisted with the Mexicans for a few years until in 1846 the Bear Flag Rebellion declared the state independent of Mexico. This was not a fact until 1848 when as part of the settlement of the Mexican American war, Mexico ceded California to the United States. With US possession came the discovery of Gold by James Marshall and the influx of people from around the world. California was quickly admitted as a state in 1850.

For more on the history of California [www.californiahistory.org/California History](http://www.californiahistory.org/California%20History),  
[www.californiahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.californiahistoricalsociety.org)

## **California Legislation**

Current Constitution and Statutes

<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/calaw.html>

Pending Legislation

<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/bilinfo.html>

Historic California Statutes, Journals and Indexes

<http://192.234.213.35/clerkarchive/>

## Major California Research Facilities

**California State Archives** [http://www.ss.ca.gov/archives/archives\\_e.htm](http://www.ss.ca.gov/archives/archives_e.htm) Online description collection catalog <http://minerva.sos.ca.gov/> , 1020 "O" Street, Sacramento CA Reference Desk: (916) 653-2246

General Information: (916) 653-7715 FAX: (916) 653-7363 ArchivesWeb@ss.ca.gov \_

**California State Library** <http://www.library.ca.gov/html/cslgen3.cfm>

California History Room, 900 N Street Room 200 (916) 654-0176 FAX (916) 654-8777

Email: cslocal@library.ca.gov

Mailing address: P.O. Box 942837 Sacramento, CA 94237-0001

**National Archives -** <http://www.archives.gov>, Access to Archival Databases

<http://aad.archives.gov/aad/>

### Pacific Region

**San Bruno** – <http://www.archives.gov/pacific/san-francisco/>

1000 Commodore Drive San Bruno, California 94066-2350 Archival research (650) -238-3501 [sanbruno.archives@nara.gov](mailto:sanbruno.archives@nara.gov)

**Laguna Niguel** – <http://www.archives.gov/pacific/laguna/>

24000 Avila Road 1st Floor, East Entrance, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677-3497 (949) 360-2641 [laguna.archives@nara.gov](mailto:laguna.archives@nara.gov)

## Finding Aids for California Collections

**OAC Online Archives of California** <http://findaid.oac.cdlib.org/> Finding Aids, Online Images and Texts from major archives and libraries throughout California

**Melvyl - Catalog of the University of California Libraries** <http://melvyl.cdlib.org> Includes California State Library and California Historical Society Library.