

Puichon (Costanoan language)

The **Puichons** held the west shore of San Francisco Bay between lower San Francisquito Creek and lower Stevens Creek, now the areas of Menlo Park, Palo Alto, and Mountain View. Their large village on San Francisquito Creek was equidistant between Mission San Francisco and Mission Santa Clara. Not surprisingly, therefore, they appeared at both missions. Most of those who went to Mission San Francisco between 1781 and 1794 were either not identified by tribelet name or designated some variant of the word **Puichon**. Those **Puichons** who went to Mission Santa Clara were noted there as being from the "San Bernardino" district, and indirectly, as being from the **Auloquis** tribe. Because only a very few "San Bernardino" converts at Mission Santa Clara can be identified to tribe, no overall population figures are available for the **Puichons**.

The San Francisquito Creek village of **Ssiputca** was mentioned six times in the Libro de Bautismos at Mission San Francisco, beginning with Father Santiago's 1787 reference to "the place of **Ssipudca**, the mouth of San Francisco Creek, of the Indians known as **Poychones**" (SFR-B 632). Three of the six entries which mention that village indicate that it belonged to tribes other than the **Puichons**. In 1787 Father Giribet baptized a twenty-eight year old woman who had been "born at **Ssiputca**, of the **Guemelenta** [**Olpen**] nation" (SFR-B 634). A different priest had baptized her son a week before.

From the place of **Ssipudca**, at the mouth of San Francisquito Creek, whose Indians are known as **Poychones**" (SFR-B 632).

Giribet was wrong in identifying the mother as a **Guemelenta** and also from **Ssiputca**. In fact, she was a **Puichon** who had recently been abducted by the **Guemelenta** (SFR-B 625). Later that year Father Giribet

wrote that **Ssiputca** belonged to the "**Chatnbn** nation" (SFR-B 643). **Chatnbn** seems to be an elevation of the nickname of a tribal leader, El Chato, to a tribal designation (see SCL-B 3680,4359). Finally, in 1788 Father Garcia baptized a child from "the village of **Sseputca**, of the family called **Saucon**, who live at the very end of San Francisquito Creek" (SFR-B 695). **Saucon** was the personal name of the mother of the first **Puichon** converts at Mission San Francisco (SFR-B 224,230,1249).

At Mission Santa Clara the term "San Bernardino" was probably first applied to a specific **Puichon** village in the Moffat Field area on lower Steven's Creek. One San Bernardino convert was baptized in 1789 "at the village of the **Yambloquis** about two leagues [5.4 miles] to the north of this mission" (SCL-B 1362). However, the key village of "San Bernardino," from the Mission Santa Clara point-of-view, seems to have been on San Francisquito Creek (SCL-B 1463,1464,1486,2046,3991; SFR-D 1065). Two "San Bernardino" people were also noted as **Auloquis** at baptism (SCL-B 3357,3751). Their families are associated with the nearest "San Bernardino" families to the mission, i.e. Stevens Creek and San Francisquito Creek. That the group was one of the most important at Mission Santa Clara is attested by the fact one of two alcaldes and one of two regidores at Mission Santa Clara in 1799 were **Auloquis** men (Viader [1799]; SCL-B 51,52).

Puichon female personal names end with the distinctive Costanoan "{vowel}+m/n" suffix group in an overwhelming sixty-eight percent of the identifiable cases. The "te" suffix, so common among neighboring Costanoan speaking tribes to the north and east, occurs on only ten percent of the female personal names. The suffix combinations are most similar to the **Oljons** on the coast to their west.