

**A GENEALOGICAL "WISH-LIST" FOR THE CANARY ISLANDS
(a listing of Louisiana's goals and objectives from Canarian archives)**

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THE ENLISTMENT RECORDS ("*los filiaciones*"): The highest priority research objective for Louisiana genealogical researchers seeking to discover information about their Canary Islands ancestors who sailed to Louisiana in the late 1770s and early 1780s, is to obtain either microfilm copies or Xerox copies (or both) of ALL of the enlistment records (*filiaciones*) of the 700± recruits of the Second Battalion of Louisiana -- a military unit which was formed about 1778. In an article published in 1980, the noted historian Miguel Molino Martínez discussed the recruitment procedure for enlisting the men of the Second Louisiana Battalion. He discussed the enlistment papers, and gave a sample of the contract form. Three copies of the enlistment contract were to be executed -- one placed with the *alcalde*, one with the *juez*, and the third to be sent to the governor of Louisiana. These *filiaciones* contain an immense amount of personal information, such as names of parents, date of birth, island of birth, place of birth, religion, name of home diocese, age, marital status, name of spouse, physical characters such as height, hair color, eyebrow color, discernable imperfections, etc. Needless to say, these 700± *filiaciones* are the Holy Grail of our investigation.

REFS: Miguel Molina Martínez, "La Participacion Canaria en la Formacion y Reclutamiento del Batallon de Luisiana" in IV Coloquio de Historia Canario-Americana (1980), Tomo II (Gran Canaria: Ediciones del Excelentisimo Cabildo Insular de Gran Canaria, 1982), pp.135-224, especially at pp.137-148.

THE CENSUS RECORDS: In 1772, Joseph de Viera y Clavijo began publishing his monumental Noticias de Historia de las Islas Canarias, and it was completed in 1783 (Edicion de Dr. Alejandro Cioranescu, Madrid: Cupsa Editorial, 1978, in three volumes). It is a work which serves as a frozen-in-time, physical description of the land, the people, the culture and institutions of the Canaries as they existed at the very time those recruits sailed to Spanish Louisiana 225 years ago. In his discussion of the seven islands in the archipelago, Viera y Clavijo identified various *censos*, *papeles*, *relaciones*, *padrones*, *matriculas* and *vistas* from the 17th and 18th centuries affecting the various islands. We do not know if they still exist, or in which archives they might be found today, or what information they might contain. They do not seem to be readily available in published form. They are as follows, arranged in chronological order:

1678 Padron General del Obispado (taken by the bishop)

This 1678 Padron General included the islands of Gran Canaria (20,458 persons), La Palma (13,892), Tenerife (49,112), La Gomera (4,773), and El Hierro (3,297). Apparently it did not cover the islands of Lanzarote or Fuertaventura.

1688 Un papel...

This document apparently covers the island of La Gomera only (4,661 persons). It does not address the other islands.

1742 - 1745 Visitas (taken by Bishop Juan Francisco Guillén)

1742: Gran Canaria (43,864 persons), La Palma (17,580);
1744: Lanzarote (7,382), Fuertaventura (7,210);
1745: Tenerife (60,618), La Gomera (6,251), El Hierro (3,687).

1757 Padrón de la Isla de La Gomera

This padron of the island of La Gomera was elaborated by the *alcalde mayor*, don Andres Fernandez Acevedo, according to an order given by Comandante General de Canarias *a traves del conde*, in addition to those censuses of señores Aranda and Floridablanca.

The padron of 1757 is grouped by households, and includes the names of each of the habitants, their ages, *cargos importantes*, servants and slaves, but it is silent as to any professional activity; it indicates the relationship of each person on the list to the head of the household. We are told that this *padrón* will be found in the Museo Municipal de Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Fondo Adeje, legajo de poblacion.

1768 Matriculas

These *matriculas* covered each of the seven islands as follows:

Gran Canaria	(41,082 persons),
Lanzarote	(9,705)
Fuertaventura	(8,863)
Tenerife	(66,354 persons)
La Palma	(19,195)
La Gomera	(6,645)
El Hierro	(4,022).

1774 Relación

This *relación* was prepared by the church pastors of La Gomera, indicating a population for La Gomera of 7,536 persons. I am unaware of any other such *relaciones* for the other islands.

Additionally, there were occasional censuses of individual towns and cities, as La Laguna for the years 1755, 1769, and 1787. It would be most useful to find a catalogue of these censuses of towns and villages, and an indication of their location and availability, especially in published form.

REFS: (1) Jose Sanchez Herrero, "La poblacion de las Islas Canarias en la segunda mitad del s.XVII (1676 a 1688)", in Anuario de Estudios Atlanticos, v.21 (1975), pp.237-415. I have not viewed this article, which was cited in Germán Hernandez Rodriguez, "La Aportacion de la Isla de la Gomera al Poblamiento de la Luisiana, 1777-1778", in IV Coloquio de Historia Canario-Americana (1980), Tomo II, pp.225-248, at p.238, in footnote no.25.

(2) Jiminez de Gregorio, "La poblacion de las Islas Canarias en la segunda mitad del s.XVIII", in Anuario de Estudios Atlanticos, v.14 (1968), pp.127-301. I have not had the opportunity of viewing this article which was also cited in Germán Hernandez Rodriguez, *op. cit.*, at p.239, footnote no.28.

PERSON-TO-PERSON: As interest in the family history and genealogy intensifies all around the world, we would hope to find a similar expression of interest in the Canary Islands, and we look forward to establishing links with our distant cousins there, so that we in America can better understand and appreciate our own heritage. Three dynamic societies here (in Louisiana) are dedicated to the heritage and culture and genealogy of the Canary Islands, and we want to establish

relationships with similar groups and societies in the Canary Islands. Already Louisiana's governmental Parish of St. Bernard has established a "twin-cities" relationship with the towns of Agüimes and Ingenio (Gran Canaria), and there are already established numerous personal friendships between individuals in Louisiana and the Canary Islands.

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