



## A Convenient Death at San Diego

*John O'Hagan*

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Move over Brother Cadfael. Father Ibarra is on the scene. It's a new era, and in fact a New World. In the tumultuous and violent territory that is Alta California, young Father Juan Ibarra, a Franciscan/physician finds himself called upon to solve not just one, but two murders. This is not what he anticipated the life of a medical missionary would be. Was it an act of revenge by an outraged Spanish army officer? Perhaps a "falling out among thieves" or maybe simple retributive justice meted out by the people themselves? While his medical skills are being put to tests he never imagined and he tries to sort out some very confused facts Father Juan finds himself swept up in the political, cultural, and sexual revolution which is having a convulsive effect on the territory. In all of this, he is drawn to the shamanistic practices and cures of the very people he had hoped to educate. Perhaps they have something to teach him about medicine. \*\*\* John O'Hagan is an amateur historian who specializes in the Spanish and Mexican era's of California. Having grown up on the central California Coast he very early on developed a life-long love affair with the California Missions. He is a member of the California Mission Studies Association (CMSA). For the past several years he has been a speaker at the annual meeting of CMSA delivering talks on various aspects of the Missions. He most recently delivered a presentation at the Museum of the American Indians in Sacramento California on the Impact of the Missions on California Natives. He has lectured extensively on the Missions, done a variety of educational programs on them and has led tours of them for people from throughout the United States. He is a partner with the "Saint Francis and the America's" project at Arizona State University that project provides a multi-disciplinary forum for students, scholars and researchers to examine the impact the spirit of Francis of Assisi, and the Franciscans have had on the new world. John recently published on their site an article; "How 142 Franciscan Friars kept the Russians out of California." John has recently published *Lands Never Trodden; The Franciscans and the California Missions* (University of Nebraska Press) which is an exhaustive review of each of the 21 California missions. This book tells not just the familiar story of the founding of the Missions, it goes into great detail on the impact the missions had on United States History. The stories of the Native Americans, whose lives were forever changed by the missions, and the everyday people struggling to make a life at the "ends of the earth" are examined at length. He is currently working on a book detailing the life of Father Fermin Francisco de Lasuen, the second "Father President" of the California Missions and the man most often given credit for the mission system as it exists today. He is also writing a series of murder mysteries, which will be fictional accounts based on documented historical events at the California Missions. John lives in Boise, Idaho and travels frequently to California to keep current on the happenings at his beloved missions. He can be reached at: John J. O'Hagan 1060 Krall St. Boise, ID 83712-7441

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