

Glossary

agriculture The practice of growing crops and raising animals for food, fiber, or other use by humans

alluvial soil Sand, silt, clay, gravel, or other matter deposited by flowing water, such as a stream

aqueduct An artificial channel for carrying a large quantity of flowing water

aquifer An underground layer of rock or sediment that holds usable amounts of groundwater

arid Very dry; not having enough rainfall to support much natural vegetation, or agriculture

atmosphere The air surrounding and bound to Earth

basin A hollow or depression in the Earth's surface that can partially fill with water after storms

bay An inlet of a body of water, such as a sea, that is usually smaller than a gulf

biodiversity Biological diversity in an environment as seen in the plant and animal species

border A boundary, especially of a state or country

canal A structure through which water flows from one point to another for irrigation or transportation

census An official count of all the people in a particular place; often a state or country

climate The average weather conditions of a particular place or region over a long period of time

delta A triangular or fan-shaped piece of land made by deposits of mud and sand at the mouth of a river

desert Dry land with few plants and little rainfall

elevation The height to which something is raised; the height above sea level

equator An imaginary circle around the Earth everywhere equal distance from the north pole and the south pole

ethnic Sharing distinctive cultural traits as a group

evaporate When a liquid changes to a vapor; removing moisture

expedition A journey or trip undertaken for a specific purpose, such as exploring

export To carry or send to another country, especially for sale

fog Fine particles of water floating in the atmosphere near the ground

foothill A hill at the foot of higher hills or mountains

freshwater Water that flows in rivers, lakes, and other water ecosystems that do not depend on salt water

glacier A large body of ice moving slowly down a slope or valley or spreading outward on a land surface

granite A very hard rock that can be polished and used in buildings and monuments

grasslands Land covered with herbs (grasses and clover) rather than shrubs and trees

groundwater Water within the Earth that supplies wells and springs

gulf A part of an ocean or sea extending into the land

headland A point of land rising above the sea; a cliff

hemisphere One of the halves of the Earth as divided by the equator or by a meridian

hydrology Movement, distribution, and characteristics of water on and below the surface of the land and in the atmosphere

immigrant A person who comes to a country to live there

indigenous Native to a certain region or country

interior The inland part of a country or state

irrigation A system that supplies water to land through pipes, artificial channels, or other means

isthmus A narrow strip of land connecting two larger land areas

lagoon A shallow channel or pond near or connected with a larger body of water

landscape The land that can be seen in one glance

latitude A measure of distance north or south of the equator on Earth

longitude A measure of distance east or west from of the prime meridian on Earth

marsh An area of soft wet land usually overgrown by grasses

marshland A marshy area

migrate To move from one place to another; to move from one region or climate to another usually on a regular schedule for feeding or breeding

mineral A naturally occurring substance obtained usually from the ground

mountain range A series of mountain ridges that are alike in form, direction, and origin

orient To set or arrange in a definite position especially in relation to the points of a compass

Pacific Rim The countries bordering on or located in the Pacific Ocean

peninsula A piece of land nearly surrounded by water or sticking out into the water

plain A broad area of level or rolling and often treeless country

plateau A broad flat area of high land

physiography A description of the features and changes of the Earth's surface

populated To have a place in; to occupy, to inhabit

population The whole number of people living in a region

precipitation Water or the amount of water that falls to the Earth as hail, mist, rain, sleet or snow

rancheria American Indian settlements established by the U.S. Government

region An area with common features that set it apart from other areas

reservation An area of public lands reserved for a special use, such as land set aside for American Indians

reservoir An artificial or natural lake where water is collected as a water supply

riparian Pertaining to or situated along the banks of a river; streamside vegetation

river A natural body of running water that is usually larger than a brook, creek, or stream, and flows into an ocean, lake, or another river

sediment Matter (such as stones and sand) deposited by water or wind

snowpack Snow that accumulates during a season

stream A body of running water flowing on the Earth; a small creek or other channel

suburb A community close to a city

survey To find out the size, shape, and position of an area of land

swamp Wet spongy land often partly covered with water

terrain The surface features of an area of land

topography The shape of the land

urban A city and its surrounding areas

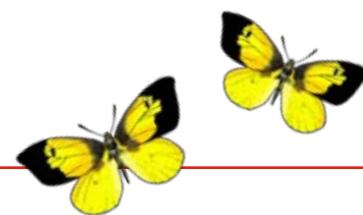
vegetation Plant life or cover

volcano An opening in the Earth's crust through which melted or hot rock and steam may come out

watershed The area that drains into a river or lake

wetland Land covered part of the time with fresh or salt water, such as a swamp or marsh

woodlands Land covered with trees and shrubs



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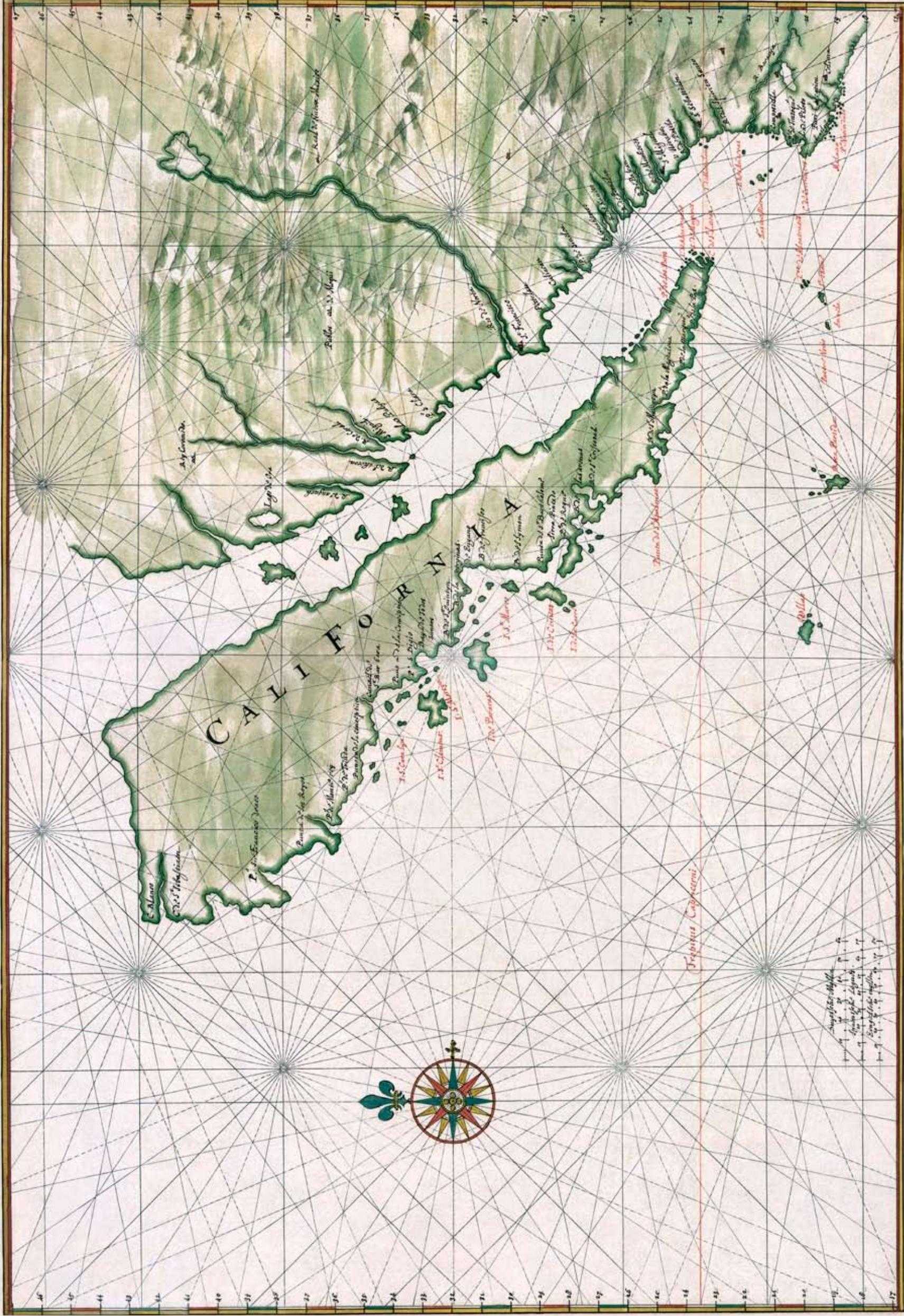
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Naming California

This map, published in the year 1650, shows California as an island. That is because European explorers first thought that a long sliver of the Pacific Ocean separated California from the mainland of North America.

In 1510, Spaniard García Ordóñez de Montalvo wrote a romantic novel that described the people who lived in this mythical land. He wrote: Know that to the right hand of the Indies exists an island called California,

very near the Terrestrial Paradise. It was populated by black women... who were brave and very strong... their arms were all of gold... without there being any men among them. Their island was the strongest of the World, with its cliffs and rocky shores. And there ruled over that island a queen of majestic proportions, who accomplished great deeds. She was valiant and courageous and ardent with a brave heart—Queen Califa.

In 1539, explorer Hernándo Cortés sent Francisco de Ulloa north up what is today called the Gulf of California (also called the Sea of Cortez).

The Spanish navigator reached the mouth of the Colorado River, proving that California was not an island. Despite de Ulloa's finding, the error continued to appear on maps until the 1800s.

While there are no records of anyone actually meeting Queen Califa, the paradise of Spanish imagination is today named after her—California, the Golden State.