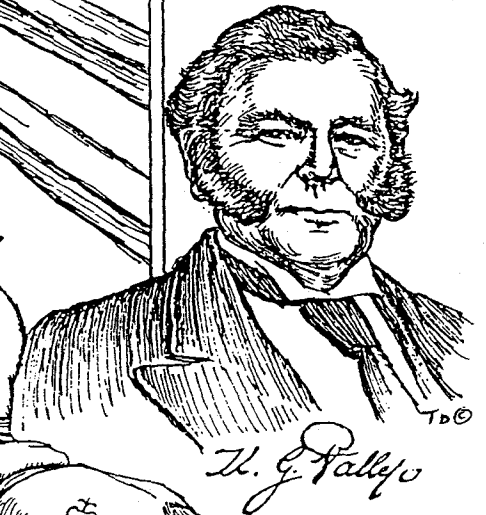
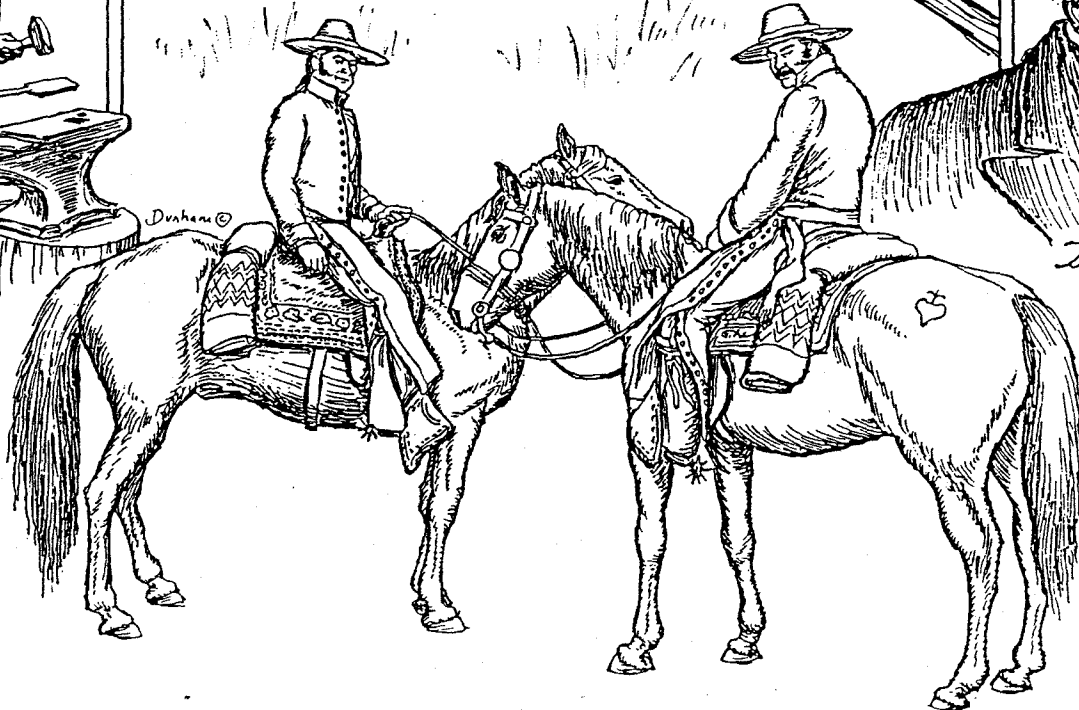
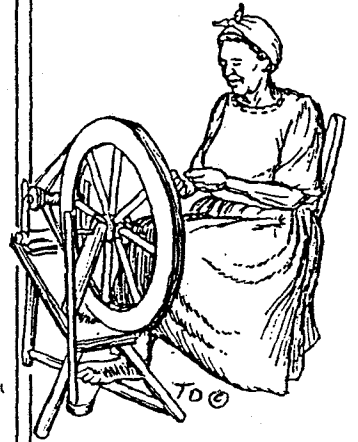
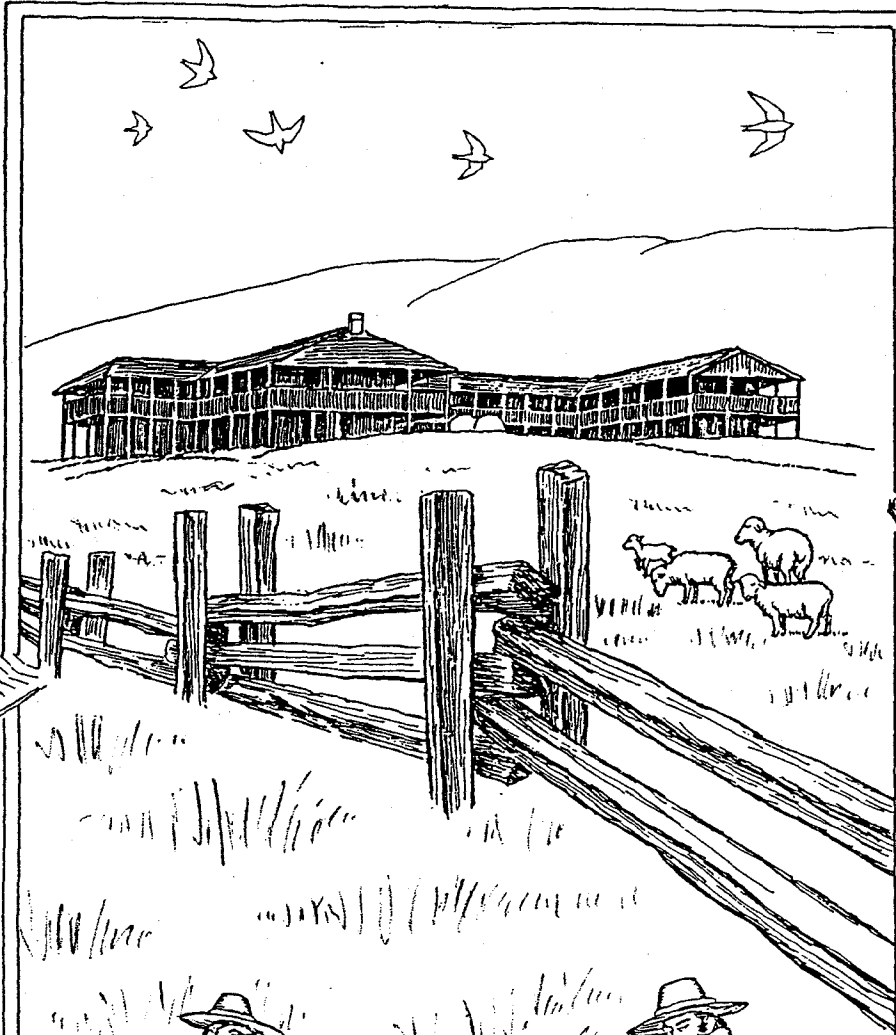


Entertainment



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Entertainment

On the *ranchos* most of the festivities were associated with home and family and often included dancing. Entertainment at the *ranchos* varied depending on the time of year. During the *matanza* (slaughtering season) the workers would slaughter between 4000-8000 cattle, brand the live ones, and count the whole herd. By the end, they were exhausted and ready for a celebration. *Fandangos* would often be held at the main *hacienda*. *Fandango* is the name of a Spanish dance but it was also the name given to any event in which dancing was a major event. However, with the growth of the society and the upper classes, *fandangos* began to refer to the dances of the lower classes. While, *bailes*, were those events that were held by the higher society members and often required an invitation.

A *fandango* often had an *El Tecolero*, or master of ceremonies. The man would introduce the dances and ladies as necessary. Another very fun social event were the *cascarone* balls. *Cascarones* were eggs that were beautifully colored. The contents were blown out and the dried eggshell was filled with finely cut gold, silver, colored paper, or cologne. The event of breaking the eggs was either done formally or in a more fun spirited game. If a man chose a woman, he would approach her, as she bowed he would break the contents of the egg in his hand and scatter the contents over her head. Later, she would do the same to him. Sometimes, the woman would go behind a man's back and scatter the contents over his head. Before he could turn to see who it was, she would hide. And, so would begin a game, and she was often found. These Balls were usually held between November and Lent, and were often a part of the week before Lent.

We have found that many classes enjoy putting on a *fiesta* in the evening. The *fiesta* can include: dancing, music, serenading, storytelling, a piñata, and many other things. We have been awed by a group of young men standing in the courtyard serenading the ladies on the balcony. It is great if the students learn the songs in the classroom prior to their visit. The ladies can make paper flowers to throw down to their suitors. However, sometimes the event is turned into a game, so it is best if the teacher maintains control of the situation. If you are going to have a *fandango*, then the students should know how to do some of the dances included in this section. The dancing can either be done in the courtyard. If rain is an issue, then the "*Fandango*" room can be used. (This means that you must roll up your sleeping gear prior to the dancing!)

Some great period music cd's are:

1. ****Cascada de Flores-Mexico ©2000 by Cascada de Flores, contact for ordering: 510-450-0125 or email cascadadeflores@earthlink.net (new cd "Puente a la mar") www.cdbaby.com

2. Fandango at Sonoma: Early California Dance Music by Los Californios, The Alta California Orchestra, contact for ordering: Deborah 707-937-2133 or www.LosCalifornios.net

3. They Came Singing: Songs from California's History by Karen W. Arlen, Margaret Batt, Mary Ann Benson, and Nancie N. Kester, contact for ordering: Calicanto Associates 510-339-2580, www.calicantoassociates.com

FIESTAS AND FUN

Life seemed easy for the people on the California ranchos. They were described by visitors as happy, carefree people who liked to have fun.

FIESTA TIME

There were many reasons to have a fiesta, or party. Some fiestas were connected with a Church holy day. Feast days of the saints were such occasions, with a procession from the church at the end of a service, followed by feasting and dancing. Fiestas were held to celebrate weddings, baptisms, or deaths. At the end of a round-up there was always a fiesta. Whenever a trading ship was in port, the ship's crew was invited to a fiesta.

A fiesta seldom lasted just one day. The merriment often went on all night and continued the next day, or perhaps for four or five days. Sometimes there would be a day and night of feasting and dancing at one rancho, then people would go home for a day or two, and then move on to another rancho for a new round of feasting and dancing.

Since the fiesta was held outside, usually in the courtyard of the rancho, there could be many guests. Often the family holding the party would invite dozens of other families, so there might be over a hundred people at the fiesta. Sometimes an entire town held a fiesta, and people from all the nearby ranchos came in to the town plaza to join in the fun.

Men, women and children all enjoyed a fiesta. They wore their fanciest clothes. The children joined the dancing in the early evening, and then were sent off to bed while the adults continued dancing.

MUSIC

Guitars and violins provided the music for the dancing and singing at a fiesta. Sometimes there would be just one guitar player. At bigger parties, there might be as many as three guitar players and three violinists. The musicians (usually men, though



women sometimes played the guitar) often wore ribbons and flowers on their hats and shirts. The people kept time to the music by clapping their hands.

DANCING

Favorite dances of the rancho people were the *jota*, *borrego*, *fandango*, *contradanza*, *jarabe*, and *bamba*. The *fandango* was a fast and difficult dance to perform. The women dancers held their bodies very still, with their arms at their sides, and moved only their feet. The men danced with more movement, weaving in circles around their partners. The term *fandango* later came to be used to refer to any big dance.

In the *bamba* dance, young ladies showed how graceful they were by dancing with glasses of water balanced on their heads. Those who managed to dance without spilling any water were showered with coins by the men. Older women watched the dancing, clapping for the younger dancers.

Another favorite dance was the *sombrero* dance in which men placed their hats on the head of a woman dancer, making a pile of hats as high as she could

balance. After the dance, each man had to give the dancer a coin in order to get his hat back.

In another version of the hat dance, a man would place his hat on a woman dancer's head as she danced. If she liked the man, the dancer would keep the hat on her head and return it to him at the end of the dance. If she did not want his attention, she would throw off the hat immediately. Sometimes the hat would be slipped on her head from behind her back and she wouldn't know whose hat it was. This made it difficult for her to know whether or not to throw back the hat.

Don Juan Bandini, a *ranchero* (rancho owner) in the San Diego area, introduced the waltz to the *Californios*. He had learned this dance while living in South America. It is said that Don Juan Bandini was an excellent dancer. The waltz was considered to be a difficult dance, an accomplishment of the finest ladies and gentlemen.

THE CASCARON

A part of many fiestas, especially near the end of the party, was the *cascarón*. The custom was to sneak up behind someone and crack an eggshell open on the person's head. The eggshell had been prepared by making a hole in the shell, blowing out the egg contents, and then refilling the eggshell with confetti (tiny bits of colored paper) or with scented water. When times were very good, the eggshell might be filled with gold dust.

The *cascarón* was a type of flirting between young men and women. A young man would break an eggshell on the head of a girl that he liked; a girl would break an eggshell on a favorite young man.

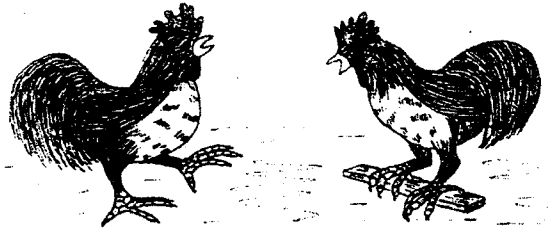
FOOD

Feasting was an important part of every fiesta. The eating was always done outdoors. A pig or steer was roasted on a spit over the hot coals in a fire pit. To this was usually added *frijoles* (beans), tortillas, pickled olives, and fruit.

COCKS, BEARS, AND BULLS

The rancheros loved to place bets on who would win a contest. That is why they enjoyed seeing a match

between two roosters. A cockfight often started with two bantam cocks fighting. Then two larger cocks would be pitted against each other. Men, women, and children all gathered to watch the cockfight.



Grizzly bears lived in the mountain areas near the ranchos and sometimes killed rancho cattle. *Vaqueros* (cowboys) might catch a bear at round-up time. The captured bear was used as a part of the fiesta entertainment, matched against a bull in a fight. Sometimes the bear and the bull were fastened together by a *reata* (long rope). The bear usually won these contests.

One historian tells that Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune* newspaper, watched a bull and bear fight on a visit to California. He then applied the terms "bear" and "bull" to the Wall Street stock exchange business.

COMPETITIONS

The rancheros' skill on horseback led to a variety of competitions between the men at a fiesta. Horse racing was popular. A track was laid out, and those who were not competing in the race enjoyed watching and betting on which rider would win.

Other competitions took place on horseback, such as attempting to pick up a handkerchief or coin on the ground while riding past. Sometimes a live chicken was buried in a hole in the ground with just its head sticking out. The horseback riders would try to pull the chicken out of the hole as they rode past.

Vaqueros competed with each other in using the *reata*, the long rope with a lasso loop in the end. The men liked to show off their skill in lassoing animals. Another competition was called "tailing the bull," where the *vaquero* would catch a bull by the tail and try to throw the bull on its back.

Piñata

Piñatas were used at many celebrations. They were used at parties, weddings, birthdays, and holidays. They are fun for the class to make before coming to the Adobe. Sometimes our teachers use them as incentive or as a reward for a good clean up job in the morning. Or they are used as part of the *fiesta* in the evening.

Rules for the Piñata

1. In good weather the piñata can be hung over one of the branches of the walnut trees.
2. The candy should all be wrapped in small bags so each student gets one and there is less litter to clean up.
3. The students should take turns striking the piñata. There should be an adult with this student and another that is watching from the edges of the circle to make sure the other students are being safe.
4. The student striking the piñata should be blind folded and spun three times. The students should understand that they are not to swing or strike at the stick until the supervisor tells them to do so.
5. All other students are to remain well out of reach.
6. When the piñata breaks, students are to remain in their places.
7. The student who breaks the piñata is to have the blindfold removed and is to pick up all the goodies from the piñata and pass them out to the class.

Making a Piñata

A paper bag piñata is easy to make and strong enough so that each child gets at least one chance to swing at it before it breaks.

Materials needed:

15 sheets (or so) of 12 x 18" multi-colored construction paper cut into 4 x 18" strips.

3 – 8oz bottles white glue (glue stick will do just as well.)

Scissors

2-3 large grocery bags

Pencils or ¼" doweling

Goodies for inside (wrapped candy"

How to do it:

1. Fringe all of the 4 x 18" strips to within 1-2" of the edge, the thinner the better.
2. Using dowel or pencil, curl the fringes on each strip.
3. Starting at the bottom of the bag, glue the fringes to all four sides of the bag.
4. Hint: The more colors you use and the closer they are put together, the fancier your finished product will look.
5. On the bottom you can put fringe
6. Fill the goodies. You are ready!

De Colores

De colores, de colores
se visten los campos
en la primavera.

De colores, de colores
son los pajaritos
què vienen de fuera

De colores, de colores
es el arcoiris
què vemos lucir

Y por eso los grandes
amores de muchos colores
me gustan a mi.

Canta el gallo
canta el gallo con su
kiri, kiri, kiri, kiri, kiri
la gallina, la gallina
con el kara, kara, kara, kara, kara

Los pollitos, los pollitos
con el pìo, pìo, pìo, pìo, pìo

Y por eso los grandes
amores de muchos colores
me gustan a mi

Y por eso los grandes
amores de muchos colores
me gustan a mi