

CHAPTER THIRTEEN



DEATH AT SAN JULIÁN

With a single blow, you will flay your
father and your mother.
And never will you avoid this fate or
flee from it.
It will follow you even to death.

—said the Dragon to Saint Julian, 13th century legend

SAINTE JULIAN THE HOSPITALER—*O EN ESPAÑOL, SAN JULIÁN*—
is the patron saint of boatmen, knights, travelers and
murderers. And so it is right that his name should be
linked to a place frequented by boatmen, knights, travelers
and murderers. Perhaps the saint keeps watch over mur-
derers because he was one himself, some three centuries
before Magellan left the shores of Spain.

At that time, Julian had the misfortune to mortally wound
a strange beast encountered during the hunt. With its dying
breath, the beast prophesied no good would come of this
mischief, and its words are seen at the top of this page.

Julian went into exile, that he might never see his parents again, and thus defeat the prophecy.

Years pass. His parents, the Duke and Duchess of Anjou, discover his place, and Julian's wife Clarice offers them her own bed-chamber, where they might rest while awaiting Julian's arrival. Julian arrives unnoticed, to discover the couple in his bed. He takes them to be his wife in the arms of her lover, and strikes them both dead. The prophecy is fulfilled.

When Julian realizes his error, he and his Clarice pledge themselves to a life of atonement, the Pope commands them to establish a hostel for the poor, and years later they give shelter to a wandering leper who begs Clarice to lay by his side to warm him. As she prepares herself, the leper vanishes, then reappears to reveal his true identity:



I am He who forgets nothing. ... If ever anyone is in distress and in need of lodging let them say a *Pater Noster* in the evening and the lodging they seek they will have. This gift I give you and I pardon your sins.

Again the visitor vanishes. The couple continue their work of providing hospitality to all who would seek it, and are visited by thieves who murder them. So ends the story of Julian and Clarice. And so begins the fame of he who was known to Fernão de Magalhães as São Julián. His feast day is February 12th; the birth date of Abraham Lincoln. And of Charles Darwin.

Above: Saint Julian, or San Julián, from Madonna and Child with Saint Sebastian and Saint Julian, a ca. 1473 fresco by Domenico Ghirlandaio

Antonio Pigafetta made note of the place where his captain sought shelter from the winter weather.

We remained in this port, which was called Port St. Julian, about five months, during which there happened to us many strange things, of which I will tell a part.

Likewise, the Genoese pilot speaks of “the Port of St. Julian,” but neither explains how they knew it by that name. It is only Maximilianus of Transylvania who writes that ...

Not till the last day of March of 1520 did they reach a bay, to which they gave the name of Saint Julian.

None of our reporters make a connection to the old tale, but it’s tempting to speculate that the man who did the actual honors—was it Magellan himself?—knew a little something of the legend. If true, then the holy name would be more than appropriate to mark the spot where a boatman-traveler would follow the example of a murderer-saint.

Magellan had been warned to expect trouble from his captains if they became displeased with him. It would be here at San Julián that this trouble would begin, and here that Magellan would end it. Pigafetta tells us ... ,

... that immediately we entered this port, the masters of the other four ships plotted treason against the captain-general, in order to put him to death.

It didn’t work. Magellan was one step ahead of the plotters, sending his trusted constable Gonzalo Gomes de Spinosa with a letter to Luis de Mendonça, captain of the *Victoria* and fleet treasurer. At first, the constable was denied boarding, but he cried out to the captain that ...

... it was weakness not to bid him enter, as he was one man alone who was bringing a letter. Upon which the captain bade him enter.

The boatmen waited alongside while Gomes de Spinosa presented the document. And then he slit Mendoza's throat. For Magellan had not only entrusted his man with a letter, but with a dagger and instructions about what to do with it. The constable's boatmen climbed on board with swords at the ready, and amidst the uproar Magellan brought his own ship alongside the *Victoria*. The few men who had risen up against de Spinosa were strung up at the yard arms, with Mendoza himself hoisted by the feet, prominently put on display for the benefit of those watching the festivities from the other ships.

The captain-general was not yet done. A trusted sailor fled to the *San Antonio*, cutting its cable later that night so that the ship drifted too close for comfort toward the *Trinidad*. Captain Juan de Cartagena was arrested, and soon afterward Gaspar de Queixada on the *Concepción* surrendered without a fight. And now all that remained was for Magellan to set an example to the others, of which there are conflicting reports. According to Pigafetta,

This Gaspar de Queixada had his head cut off, and then he was quartered. And Juan de Cartagena was banished with a priest, and put in exile on that land named *Patagoni*.

Pigafetta says nothing of the other conspirators, and emphasizes that Magellan did not have Cartagena's head because the Emperor himself had appointed him a captain. In an order issued months later to Duarte Barbosa—captain of *Victoria* after the mutiny—Magellan himself mentions "... the death of Luis de Mendoza, Gaspar de Queixada, and the banishment of Juan de Cartagena and Pero Sanches de

Reina, the priest." Yet the contemporary historian Gaspar Corea gives a rather different account:

He ordered Cartagena to be quartered, having him publicly cried as a traitor; and the body of Luis de Mendoça also was quartered; and he ordered the quarters and the executed men to be set on shore, spitted on poles. ... He ordered two priests, who had taken part in the mutiny, to be set on shore, and a brother of Cartagena, and he left them thus banished.

Conflicting stories about the fate of the castaways were heard elsewhere: one account states that as the *San Antonio* made its way back to Spain after deserting Magellan in the strait, the ship re-visited San Julián to pick up Cartagena and the priest de Reina. In another account, a search party was sent from Spain after the deserters arrived and reported the incident. But there is nothing to support either story; presumably the banished ones did not make it back to civilization, for we hear nothing later of their version of Magellanic justice. Perhaps they ended their days as the dinner guests of Magellan's Patagones.

The fleet left their sanctuary on August 24th, 1520, and that was the end of the port of Saint Julian.

Until 1578. In that year, Captain—but not yet, Sir—Francis Drake approached the South American continent with his fleet, which now included some recent acquisitions: the first, which Drake named *Christopher*, was a fishing vessel acquired from a Spanish captain in trade for the pinnace *Benedict*. Perhaps he made its former owner an offer he couldn't afford to refuse.

And then the *Mary* was added to the fleet. The former Portuguese *Santa Maria* had been captured off the Cape Verde

islands, given the simpler name and placed in the hands of Drake's trusted partner and friend Thomas Doughty.

And that's when the trouble began. According to one report, Doughty found Drake's own brother Thomas ("not the wysesst man in Christendom," according to John Cooke), stealing from the captured ship's cargo. What he swiped, where he hid it, and how Doughty found it goes unrecorded, but nevertheless the captain reported the incident to Drake, who was furious. Not with his brother, but with Doughty. For, said the captain, a charge against his brother was a charge against himself. Amidst claims and counter-claims, Drake took charge of the *Mary*, and sent Doughty off to command the *Pelican*.

Brother Thomas and his people filled Drake's head with tales of misdeeds by the other Thomas, who was nothing by a thief himself. For reasons unknown, Drake apparently went along with these accusations and on some pretext summoned Doughty back to the *Mary*. As Doughty's small boat approached, Drake denied him boarding and sent him off to the *Swan*. Thus separated from his friends on the *Pelican*, Doughty was reduced to the inconsequential captaincy of the least important vessel in the fleet.

Before reaching the port of Saint Julian, Drake—now back on his *Pelican* again—had the *Swan* brought alongside, to be stripped and destroyed. Doughty was transferred yet again; this time to the *Christopher*, which soon became separated from the others. This was of course Doughty's doing, said Drake, ...

... terminge hym a conjurer and witche, and,
at eny tyme when we had any fowle weather,
he would say that Thomas Dowghty was the
occafyoner thereof. ... and his brother the
yonge Doughty, a wiche, a poysonar, and
fuche a one I cane not tell from whence he
came, but from the dyvell I thinke.

When the ship eventually reappeared, it too was ordered stripped and abandoned. As a final indignity, Doughty and his brother John were sent off to the *Elizabeth*, and it was in this state of affairs that on June 20th, 1578, the *Pelican*, *Elizabeth*, *Marigold* and *Mary* reached the little port of Saint Julian.

Here, two days later, Drake went ashore with the gunner Oliver, Mr. Robert Winterhey and a small group of gentlemen to meet the giants of Pigafetta's account. Mr. Winterhey tried to show how well the English could shoot, but his bow string broke. One of the Indians had better luck, with an arrow through the chest of Mr. Oliver, who fell dead on the spot. Winterhey was wounded before Drake was able to seize the fallen gunner's weapon and fire on the Indian who had shot the first arrow.

The piece being charged with a bullet, and haile shot, and well aimed, tare out his bellie and gutts, with great torment, as it seemed by his cry, which was so hideous and horrible a roare, as if ten bulls had joyned together in roaring.

On seeing the damage done, the others lost their appetite for warfare; Drake and his men brought the wounded man back to the ship. But it was too late: Mr. Fletcher tells us "he dyed with in few houres" and then worked up his own explanation for the native hostility.

For the losse of their friends (the remembrance whereof is assigned and conveighed over from one generation to another, among their posteritie) breedeth an old grudge, which will not easily be forgotten, with so quarrellsome and revengefull a people.

The chaplain does not explain how he came by his knowledge of native customs in the very few days since his arrival. He of course knew that Magellan captured two natives a half-century earlier at this place. But did he really know that the attackers also remembered this outrage and would seek their revenge at the first opportunity? Probably not. And so he created his own explanation to suit the occasion.

Some years later, the captain of the captured *Cacafuego*, San Juan de Antón, gave his deposition about the loss of his ship, during which he recalled a conversation with the pilot Custodio Rodriguez, captured by Drake in Peru. While both were held on the *Golden Hinde*, Rodriguez spoke of the deaths of Oliver and Winterhey, telling de Antón that “An Indian had said that other men like them had killed his father and that he wished to kill them.”

Perhaps the pilot picked up this little anecdote from the chaplain, and didn’t think to inquire how he would know that, since neither the Indians nor the English understood each other.

To return to the unfortunate Oliver and Winterhey, they were “both layd in one grave, as they both were partakers of one manner of death.” And then Drake turned his attention back to Thomas Doughty, for there was serious mischief afoot.

There grew another mischief as great, yea farre greater, and of farre more greivous consequence then the former. But it was, by Gods providence, detected and prevented in time, which else had extended it selfe, not onely to the violent shedding of innocent blood, by murdering our generall and such others as were most firme and faithfull to him: but also to the finall overthrow of the whole action intended, and to other most dangerous effects.

There would be a trial at Saint Julian against “the conjurer and seditious person” Thomas Doughty. Drake read the charges:

Thomas Doughty, you have heare fought
by divers meanes in as mych as you maye to
discredite me to the great hinderaunce and
ovarthrowe of this voyage.

Doughty responded that he would willingly defend himself in any English court.

Nay, Thomas Doughtye, I will here impanell
a jurye on you.

Drake was steady in his attack, if not Fletcher in his spelling. Several of Doughty’s friends were appointed to serve the court, with one appointed Foreman of the Jury. The trial would have all the outward appearances of fairness, at least to those who didn’t know any better. Still, some of the ship’s company did not like the way things were going, and wondered what punishment Drake had in mind. One Leonard Vicary, himself a lawyer, put it directly to the captain: “There is, I trust, no matter of death?” To which Drake lied, “No, no, Mastar Vickarye.”

But there was indeed a matter of death, for Drake soon persuaded the men that if he fell victim to Doughty’s plans, the voyage would fail and they might not even find their way home again. Some years later, a witness described what was about to happen, and told of Drake’s behavior.

On this island in porte S. Julyan passed
many matters which I think God would not
have concealed, and especially for that they
tended to murder, for here he spewyd oute
agaynst Thomas Dowghty all his venome. ...

The worlde nevar comytted fact lyke unto this, for here he mordered hym that yf he had well loked into hymself, had bene a more sure and stedfast friend unto him.

If the writer, John Cooke, was as friendly to Doughty in life as he was in death, perhaps he would not have lived to tell his tale. His name appears as witness on several written charges against Doughty. But perhaps he was a silent witness, finding his voice only after the general himself was gone to his reward.

As for the verdict in the trial of Thomas Doughty, Drake put it to the jurors in the simplest terms:

They that think this man worthy to dye
 let them with me hold upp theyr hands and
 they that think him not worthy to dye hold
 downe theyr hands.

Few held down their hands. The trial was over.

*He had deserved death: And that it stode, by
 no means with their Safety, to let him live: And
 therefore, they remitted the manner thereof, with the
 rest of the circumstances to the generall.*

This judgement, and as it were affise, was
 held a land, in one of the Ilands of that port;
 which afterwards, in memory hereof was
 called, the Iland of *True iustice and iudgement*.

Drake offered the prisoner three choices; to be executed here, to be set ashore to take his chances amongst the Indians, or to be returned to England to answer before the Lords of Her Majesty's Council. Doughty begged leave to consider, then made his choice:

He professed, that with all his heart, he did embrace the first branch of the generals proffer; desiring onely that they might receive the holy communion, once againe together before his death.

And so it was to be.

And after this holy repast, they dined also at the same table together, as cheerefully in sobriety, as ever in their lives they had done aforesime: each cheering up the other, and taking their leave, by drinking to each other, as if some journey onely had beene in hand.

Some journey only was indeed in hand—a one-way journey for Thomas Doughty, which he took on July 2nd.

On the mainland, Drake's men had found "a gibbet, fallen downe, with mens bones underneath it," which they concluded marked the place where Magellan executed Juan de Cartagena, the Bishop of Burgos' cousin. Notwithstanding the uncertainty of Cartagena's actual fate (death or banishment), the gibbet was no doubt the work of Magellan.

But Drake's men chose a different site for Doughty. He "was buried in the said Island, neere to them which was slaine" and the burial party found the means to mark the place for future visitors.

In the Iland, as we digged to burie this gentleman, we found a great grinding stone, broken in two parts, which wee tooke and set fast in the ground, the one part at the head, the other at the feet, building up the middle space, with other stones and turfes of earth, and engraved in

the stones, the names of the parties buried there, with the time of their departure, and a memoriall of our generalls name in Latine, that it might the better be understood, of all that should come after us.

We named the Iland the Iland of Blood, in respect of us and Magilanus.

Or as a later observer put it,

This port I take to be accurfed, for that Magellan likewise put some to death there for the like offence.



"Mr. Doughty beheaded by Order of Sir Francis Drake at Port St. Julian on the Coast of Patagonia"

A detail from a ca. 1780 engraving by Edward Rooker

And soon it was time (except for Mr. Doughty) to move on.

With finging of Pfalms and giving of thankes
for God's great and fingular graces, wee
departed the *Bloody* Iland and Port Julian,
ſetting our courſe for the ſuppoſed Streight
with three ſhipps onely, that is, the Pellican
being Admirall, the Elizabeth the Vice-
Admirall, and the bark Marigold.

The late Portuguese prize *Mary*, now "leake and troublesome" was left behind, and thus Francis Drake dealt with the three ships associated with Thomas Doughty.

The grinding wheel is lost now, as are the remains of the *Mary*. And it would take almost another century until there came a discovery that the Isle of True Justice held more than the remains of the unfortunate Thomas Doughty.

That discovery came when Captain John Narborough approached San Julián in early April, 1670 aboard his ship *Sweepstakes*. As did his predecessors Magellan and Drake, Narborough thought it best to wait out the winter here.

I ſent in my boat to diſcover the Harbour, and
ſee if the Pink was there. My Lieutenant told
be there was a ſafe Harbour, and Water enough
for a bigger ſhip, but no Pink, nor any ſign of
her having been there; now I deſpaired of ever
ſeeing her more.

The captain had good cause to despair. He would discover later that His Majesty's hired *Batchelour* pink, Captain Humphrey Fleming, had deserted him and sailed home, thereby perhaps depriving San Julián of another grave while giving the crew something new to worry about.

The company thought 'twould be dangerous
being a lone Ship, a ſtormy Sea to fail in,
and if we ſhould happen to run aground any
where, could expect no relief.

Narborough did what he could to calm their fears. He recalled an earlier voyager, indirectly reminded them they were sailing with no ordinary navigator and then appealed to their pride.

Captain Drake went round the World in one Ship, when in those days there were but ordinary Navigators; and was it for us to question our good fortune, who beyond Comparifon are bétter Seamen. And for me, I would expose no Man to more danger than my felf in the Attempt.

If he regretted an opportunity lost to follow the examples of Magellan and Drake by leaving the recently-departed Captain Fleming's bones behind, he said nothing of it in his journal.

While wintering at San Julián, Master's Mate John Wood visited the scene of Doughty's execution.

The island in this Harbour, where he was executed and buried, was called by the Name of the *Iſle of True Juſtice* by Sir *Francis*, where he had the miſfortune to have two of his Men ſlain by the Natives (who were buried on the now-mentioned Iſland, and whoſe Graves and Bones we found).

Mr. Wood was of course mistaken; the men were buried on the island, but both died of wounds received on the mainland. There is also some question about whose "graves and bones" were found, for we know that Drake's men were laid to rest in a common grave. So if Mr. Wood found more than one grave, as he says, then one may have been for Thomas Doughty, the other for Robert Winterhey and Mr. Oliver.

Later on, Mr. Wood decided to mark the visit of the *Sweepstakes* with an honor to himself.

On the 12th of *April*, my felf, the Boat-Swain,
and two men more went up to the top of an
Hill at East, which is the highest between Cape
St. *George*, and the Streights of *Magellan*, where
I had the Curiosity to Ingrave my Name, and
call'd the Place *Mount-wood*.

A pity Mr. Wood said nothing more about his inscription, which may have been carved in wood, or may have been chiseled in stone. If the latter, perhaps it is still there, although there are no reports of later visitors finding it.

Later in the day, Wood caught a sudden motion behind a bush and got ready to shoot the animal hiding there, then realized the animal was not an animal, but a man. On being discovered, the man "... stood up and removed a little further, where he was met by Six more with their Bows and Arrows." Wood decided it would be "most advisable" to return to the ship, which he did without further incident.

A few days later, he and the captain went ashore again, to a lake with much salt. Wood paced off the lake, found it to be about ten miles long and according to his computation might contain some 200,000 tons of salt. The men brought some of it back to the ship, although how much is not entirely clear:

Narborough: "We laid up near two Tuns out
of the Water."

Wood: "We fêch'd at several times to the
quantity of Ten Tuns."

And then something strange happened—at least according to Master Wood when he went back for more:

Going three Days after to fêch some of it off, we could not find as much of it as would fill an Egg-shell, which was so much the more admirable, since there had no Rain fallen in the mean time to dissolve it.

Admirable indeed that a salt bed of that size could disappear so fast under the prevailing conditions. But again, there's a difference of opinion to be noted—the captain wrote that the salt bed “began to decay with the Rain and Weather beating on it.”

As the Patagonian winter dragged on, Narborough found traces of other visitors to the area.

Tuesday July 12. I saw in two places pieces of floor Timbers of a Ship; they have laid a long time rotting. I saw wooden Plates, and a piece of Cork, and a piece of an old Oar: some Christian Ship had been here formerly.

It had been almost a century since Drake, so despite the temptation to link this discovery to his abandoned ship *Mary*, the chances are good that some other Christian Ship left its bones on the shore in more-recent years.

By month's end, at least some of the men may have regretted their long visit to San Julián.

I have now twelve Men lame with the cold, and their Legs and Thighs are turned as black as a black Hat, in spots, the cold having chilled the Blood. These are such People as I could not make fit by any means; they that fit are as well as any Men in the World can be.

The captain does not entertain the notion that perhaps some were incapable of stirring because of their illness, and the well—perhaps even Narborough himself—

might find themselves in the same state if their luck changed. Yet despite the illness, the *Sweepstakes* stayed on at San Julián until mid-September, when Narborough finally had enough:

I considering my Men, being very weak,
thought it most fit to go for *Port Desire*, and
there to refresh the Men, for I knowing there
I could have what Penguins and Seals I would
have, which are good Provisions.

And so the ship moved on, but not before Master Wood added a parting remark about life at Puerto San Julián:

I cannot pass over without mentioning a little
Creature with a Bushy Tail, which we called a
Huffer, because when he sets fight on you, he'll
stand vapouring and patting with his Fore-
feet upon the Ground, and yet hath no manner
of defence for himself but with his Breech; for
upon your approaching him, he turns about
his Back-side, and squirts at you, accompanied
with the most abominable Stink in the World.

Apparently San Julián would be remembered by the ship's company as the place where they first became acquainted with the American skunk. The Indians might have told them it's a creature best admired from a distance, but perhaps they felt it best to let the English discover nature at first hand, even if that hand might stink for a long time thereafter.

We come at last to boatmen-travelers who were neither knights nor murderers, but who were nevertheless present when again came death to Puerto San Julián.

During the first voyage of HMS *Beagle*, and before Captain Pringle Stokes took his own life, Lieutenant E. Hawes inva-

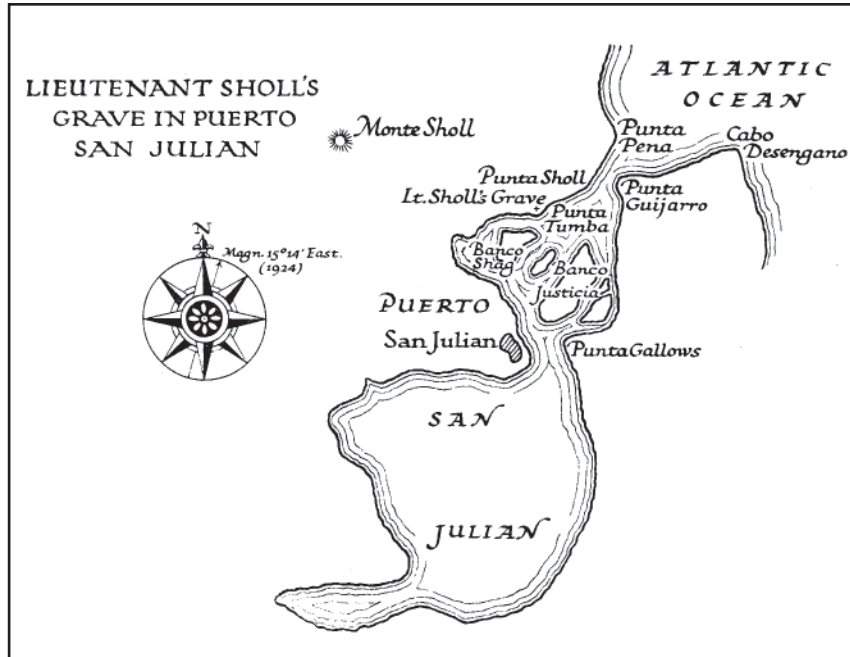
lided in September of 1826. According to Captain King of the *Adventure*, "the vacancy was given, at my request, to Mr. Sholl." King cited Sholl as the midshipman most conversant with the duties of the position, and the commander-in-chief went along with the request. Accordingly, Midshipman R. H. Sholl of the *Adventure* moved over to assume his duties as Lieutenant R. H. Sholl of the *Beagle*. As that ship's log for the year 1828 reports, his career was not long.

Sunday, January 20th. 2.45 pm. Departed this life Lieut. Sholl.

Monday, January 21st. 8:40 am. Capt. went with the Cutter to find a convenient place to inter the body of Deceased. 11.15: The Officers, Marines and Seamen went in the Yaul to inter the body of the Deceased. 4.50 pm: Yaul returned with the Officers. At 6 Captain returned in the Cutter.

The *Beagle* continued its way down the eastern coast of South America, eventually re-joining the *Adventure* off Port Famine. There, Captain King heard the news:

By the *Beagle*'s arrival we were informed of the death of Lieutenant Robert H. Sholl, after an illness of ten days. His remains were interred at Port San Julian, where a tablet was erected to his memory. This excellent young man's death was sincerely regretted by all his friends, and by none more than me. He was appointed to the expedition, as a midshipman, solely on account of his high character.



Lieutenant Sholl's grave overlooks Drake's Isle of True Justice

Beyond Sholl's "illness of ten days," no details on the cause of his death are known. A local legend had it that he died by his own hand after running the *Beagle* aground, but the only record of such an incident occurred as Captain Pringle Stokes himself guided the ship to an anchorage on January 31st of the previous year. He reported that "I went too close to the outer islet, and the ship struck violently on a rocky ledge." And it did so more than once, according to ship's clerk John Macdouall.

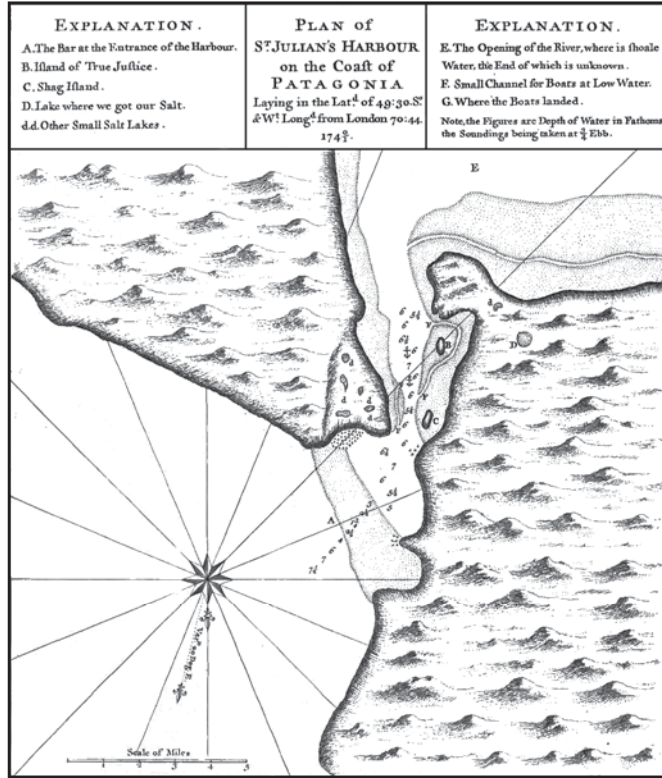
In passing too near the rocks, ... the ship struck three successive times, grating harshly against them, and heeling-over fearfully; each shock made sad defalcations in the glass and crockery, both of the officers and ship's company.

FitzRoy and Darwin visited San Julián in 1834, without much enthusiasm. According to FitzRoy, ...

This dreary port, difficult of access and inhospitable even when the stranger is within its entrance, is well known to readers of early voyages [to say nothing of readers of the present opus] as the place where Magalhaens so summarily quelled a serious mutiny, and conspiracy against his own life, by causing the two principal offenders, captains of ships in the squadron, to be put to death: and as the scene of the unfortunate Doughtie's mock trial and unjust execution. That two such remarkable expeditions as those of Magalhaens and Drake should have wintered at Port San Julian, and that two such tragedies should have occurred there is remarkable. In the plan of that port we now see Execution Island, Isle of True Justice, (injustice?) and Tomb Point: the two former names given by Drake. And the latter a memento of Lieut. Sholl, of the Beagle.

Apparently the captain had his doubts about the legitimacy of Drake's trial of his former friend. As for Darwin, if he had an opinion he kept it to himself:

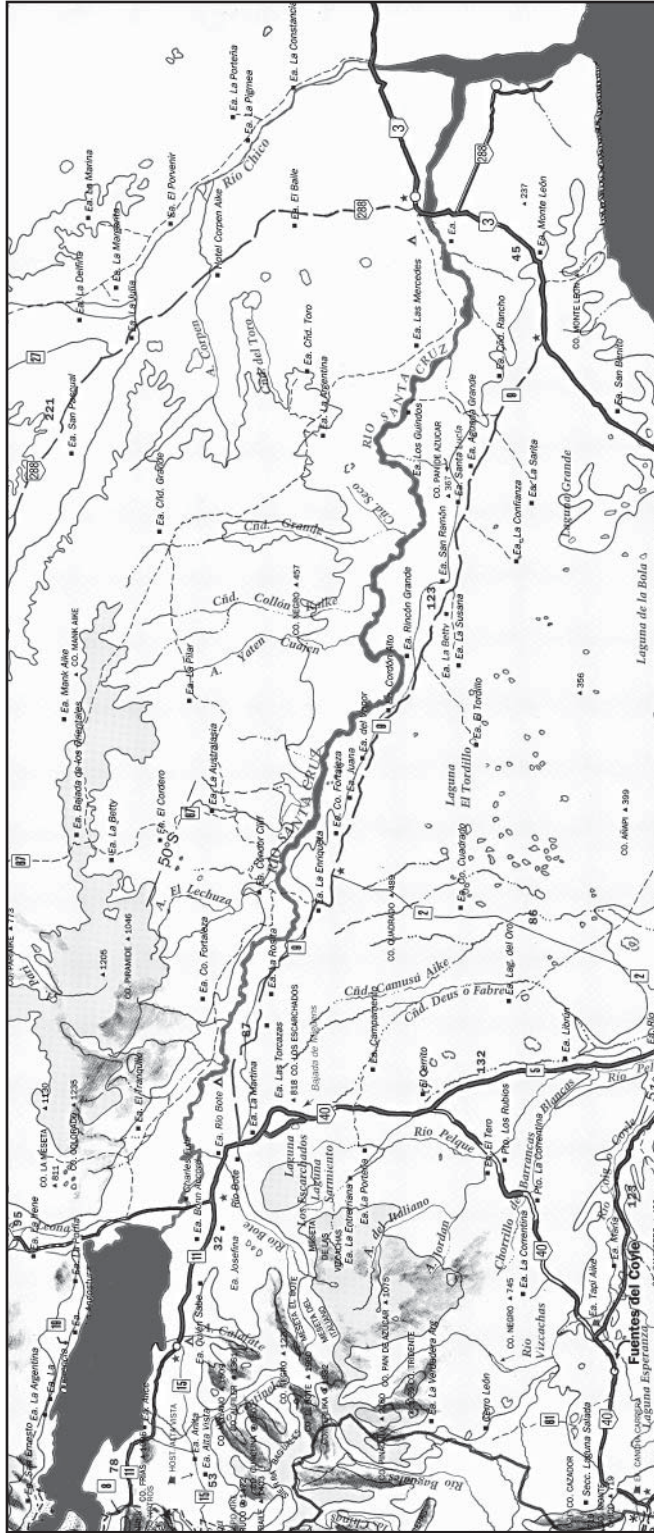
January 14th—Two things have been found here for which we cannot account: on a low point there is a large Spanish oven built of bricks, & on the top of a hill a small wooden cross was found. It might conceivably have been Magellan's cross, if the wood had survived more than 300 years. Of what old navigators these are relics it is hard to say.—Magellan was here & executed some mutineers; as also did Drake & called the Island "true justice."



Engraver R. W. Seale's 1745 chart of San Julián Harbour, with south at the top

Detail view shows:
 A: Bar at harbor entrance
 B: Isle of True Justice
 C: Shag Island
 D: Lake with salt supply
 d. Other small salt lakes





Rio Santa Cruz, from its source at Lago Argentino (upper left) to the Atlantic Ocean (lower right)