

ARBALLO, MARÍA FELICIANA (1762–?)

“a very bold widow [who] sang some verses that were not at all nice, was applauded and cheered by the crowd.” Father Font, cited in *Latinas in the United States: A Historical Encyclopedia*.

María Feliciano Arballo journeyed to California as part of Captain Juan Bautista de Anza’s 1775–1776 colonizing expedition. Of Spanish birth, she was a rebellious teen who defied her parents by marrying a common *mestizo* soldier. He died before de Anza’s expedition, but rather than remain behind, Arballo convinced Captain de Anza that she and her daughters could complete the journey. With one daughter riding in front and the other in back, they traveled by horseback all the way to California. Her trials reveal a strong, assertive, and headstrong woman who faced frontier hardships and changes of fortune with resolve and determination. She also left a lasting political legacy, being the grandmother of two California governors.