

## **My Great-Great Grandmother Gabriela Alvarez De La Garza** **By Irma Longoria Cavazos 2-15-2011**

I have been doing genealogy for over ten years. I had overlooked my great-great grandmother Gabriela Alvarez De La Garza. I have done a lot of research on her husband Manuel Perez Gonzalez and his ancestors. I have also done research on all their children. How did I overlook her?

I asked my mother Micaela De Luna Longoria what she knew about her. My mother didn't know her great-grandmother. Her mother Juanita De Luna Perez told her that she was light skinned and short. The 1860 Starr County census had her as a seamstress. This fact explained the knowledge her son Ponciano Perez had about sewing. He was the one that taught my grandmother Juanita how to sew. He probably learned from his mother.

I found out that Gabriela was buried in the same tomb as her husband Manuel Perez Gonzalez at the family cemetery in La Mesa Ranch. This cemetery was recently given the honor of a Texas Historical Cemetery and given a new name to honor my grandparents Vivian and Juanita Perez De Luna.



**DeLuna Cemetery receives Historic Texas Cemetery designation by The Historical Commission. The cemetery is over 100 years old. It has been owned by The Vivian De Luna family since 1913. It had been owned by the Perez family until my grandfather Vivian bought it. A dedication ceremony to commemorate this historic event will be held on Sunday, December 12, 2010 at 11A.M.**

**Shown above are the owners of the cemetery Adela L. Villarreal and Micaela L. Longoria.**

According to my mother years ago there was a glass frame on the gravestone and under this glass was the information on both Manuel Perez Gonzalez and Gabriela Alvarez De La Garza. The glass broke many years ago and the information disappeared. My cousin Linda Montemayor recently put a gravestone on the gravesite that has her name on it. Finally, she gets the recognition that she deserves. At least we know that when we are gone her name will be there and the rest of our descendants will know that she is there.



A few years ago a primo, Hernan Contreras, brought a CD to my house with information on the Perez family that his family had. In the CD I found some facts that gave me some information on Gabriela's ancestry.

I was able to start her genealogy from this document. In this CD there was an old family tree which was done by my grandmother's cousin Casimiro Perez Alvarez from Rio Grande City many years ago. In that family tree I found a connection which was also found in the book by Joel Rene Escobar by the title "Family History of Capt. Miguel Sanchez Saenz and his Descendants" where I found that this Captain Miguel Sanchez Saenz was my direct ancestor through his son Diego Saenz. I was floored! I didn't have a clue. I also found some more information on Joel Rene's newest book "Capt. Ignacio Guerra Canamar and his Descendants". All the information was there but I didn't know the names of these ancestors.

The name that made the connection possible was that of Antonio Garcia De Sepulveda o Benavides. This was a new name in my family tree! Besides the books of Joel Rene Escobar I found some information on Duaine's book "With All Arms".

On the document title "Memoria" which is on the next page I found the ancestors' names that I needed. The document is not dated but it is old and it was handwritten. It doesn't have the author of this paper. I got it from my third cousin Hernan Contreras who got it from his mother Estella Perez Contreras. I am eternally grateful that he gave me that CD and the Family Tree that his grandfather Casimiro Perez had done many years ago. Without these two documents I would have never found the family of my great-great grandmother Gabriela Alvarez De La Garza.

## Memoria.

Hereditos de Margarita Valle de Benavides.

Sasinto Garcia de Sepulveda caso con Clara de Renteria de dicho matrimonio nacio Antonio Garcia de Sepulveda quien caso con Margarita Valle de Benavides hija del capitán Franco Vaes de Benavides de dicho matrimonio nacio Antonio<sup>II</sup> Garcia de Sepulveda quien caso Catalina Garcia de Sepulveda de cuyo matrimonio tuvo varios herederos una hija de los cuales caso con Pedro Vela quien tuvo una hija (Teresa Vela) quien tuvo una hija que se llamo Sapopa Gonzalez ~~y caso con~~ de quien nacio Rafael Peña, y en segunda nupcias tuvo á Margil Alvarez y José Maria Alvarez. Todos estos mencionados constan en los documentos que paran en el poder Nepomusino López vecino de Cerralvo.

Maria Gabriela Alvarez was born about 1813 in Camargo, Tamaulipas, Mexico. She was the daughter of Jose Maria Alvarez born in Rancho de San Joseph de Buena Vista near Camargo, Tamaulipas, Mexico in 1773. Her mother was Ana Francisca De La Garza. Maria Gabriela was baptized on March 24, 1813 in Camargo, Tamaulipas, Mexico. Ana Francisca De La Garza was the daughter of Benito De La Garza and Maria Teresa De La Garza. Ana and Benito were married about 1783 in Camargo, Tamaulipas, Mexico. Benito De La Garza was the son of Francisco De La Garza and Maria Rita Hinojosa. Jose Maria Alvarez and Ana Francisca De La Garza were married on May 16, 1799 in Camargo, Tamaulipas, Mexico. Jose Maria was the son of Matias Ventura Alvarez (1722) and Maria Sapopa Gonzales (1746). My mother tells me that her mother wanted to name her Sapopa and that she was glad that she hadn't. I had known about Sapopa Gonzalez and Matias Alvarez from my mother. I knew about her parents but Maria Teresa De La Garza was a new ancestor. Maria Teresa ancestry provided me with more names of ancestors and I was able to extend our family tree. Matias Ventura Alvarez and Sapopa Gonzalez were married on August 28, 1889. Matias was the son of Francisco De Alvarez and Maria Bentura De Herrera. Maria Sapopa was the daughter of Xavier Gonzales and Maria Teresa Bela.

Maria Teresa was the daughter of Pedro Bela and Catarina Garcia De Sepulveda. This connection was the gem that I needed. Catarina was the daughter of Antonio Garcia de Sepulveda O Benavides and Juana De Cepeda Saenz. Juana was the daughter of Capt. Ambrocio De Cepeda and Maria Micaela Saenz De Valle. Micaela was the daughter of Diego Saenz Trevino and Clara De Valle. Clara De Valle was the daughter of Nicolas de Valle Flores de Valdes y Salazar and Maria de La Pena. Nicolas was the son of Rodrigo Flores de Valdes de Carballo and Ma Isabel de Salazar Y Trevino. She was the daughter of Pedro de Salazar and Isabella de Quintanilla. Rodrigo was the son of Juan Alonso Flores de Valdes and Alfonsa (Aldonsa) Carballo. Diego was the son of Capt. Miguel Sanchez Saenz and Ana De Trevino Y Ayala. Miguel was the son of Juan Saenz de Pentecilla and Ana Muntion. Ana de Trevino y Ayala was the daughter of Jose de Trevino and Leonor De Ayala.

Can you imagine how I reacted when I realized that from these ancestors I would connect to Rodrigo Diaz de Vibar (El Cid Campeador) again? I was able to go back twenty three generations. Now I had gone back over forty generations on my great great-grandmother's ancestry! Amazing!!!

The information is from Joel Rene Escobar's books "Family History of Capt. Miguel Sanchez Saenz and his Descendants", "Rodrigo Diaz De Vibar and his Descendants", and "Capt. Ignacio Guerra Canamar and his Descendants". I shall forever be grateful to our good friend Joel Rene Escobar for all the work he did while he was here. We will miss him.

I found the new information on Gabriela by connecting Antonio Garcia de Sepulveda with the ancestors from the old family tree and from the information of Joel Rene Escobar.

Gabriela Alvarez and Manuel Perez Gonzalez were married about 1840 in Starr County. They lived in Starr County until after 1873 when he bought a sitio of land from my paternal great great grandfather Gregorio Villarreal at La Encantada in Hidalgo County, now Brooks County in Texas. He was in his sixties when he and his family moved to La Encantada in about 1873. Some of their children were already married and living in Starr County. He and his family lived in La Encantada for about twenty years. He built a home and his children also had homes in their ranch called "La Mesa de San Francisco". This is the home where my grandparents lived for many years. It had belonged to Gabriela's son Ponciano Perez, my great grandfather and his wife Antonia Bazan Perez. I have an idea that it was the original home of Manuel Perez Gonzalez and Gabriela Alvarez De La Garza. The ranch is still called "La Mesa".



**This is the house where my grandparents lived until the 1950's. It was an old house which had belonged to my great grandparents. In this picture: Back: Grandmother Juanita Peres De Luna, son-in-law Perfecto Reyes and son-in-law Gilberto Villarreal. Front Row: Grandfather Vivian De Luna and son Marcelo De Luna. This is circa 1948. It was a very nice house and it was big. I enjoyed both porches.**

Antonio Garcia De Sepulveda was the son of Antonio Garcia De Sepulveda and Margarita De Benavides. This Antonio was the son of Jacinto Garcia De Sepulveda and Clara De Renteria. I was already familiar with this family through another of my lines. Jacinto was the son of Anton Garcia and Ana De Sepulveda (1626). Clara De Renteria was the daughter of Gonzalo Fernandez De Castro and Maria Rodriguez Trevino. Gonzalo Fernandez de Castro was born in Llerena, Nueva Galicia (Zacatecas) in 1598, according to a deposition given in 1624 when he was 26 years. He was the son of Juan Fernandez de Castro and Dona Mayor de Renteria . He married Maria Rodriguez daughter of Diego Rodriguez and Sebastiana de Trevino.

Jacinto Garcia De Sepulveda was a half brother of Martin De Zavala. Martin was the natural son of Agustin de Zavala and Dona Ana de Sepulveda. His father was one of the wealthiest men of the area and he

accepted him as his son. He gave him all the care that he needed. Martin was raised in the house of his father. His father sent him to school in Spain when he was sixteen years old. He went to Salamanca where he graduated to a position in the Royal Court. He traveled and studied in Italy and Flanders. He spoke fluent Italian and Flemish. Don Martin was living well in the European tradition when his father summoned him home to take up a life of responsibility as Governor of Nuevo Leon. In 1626, Governor De Zavala was starting his first year of thirty-nine years of service as Governor of Nuevo Leon. Ana had married Don Anton Garcia and had three children with him. Jacinto was the youngest. He was born in 1618. He was about eighteen years younger than his half brother Don Martin De Zavala. He became the right arm of the Zavala regime. He married Clara de Renteria. This information is from the book by Carl L. Duaine "With All Arms".

Margarita De Benavides was another important clue. She was the daughter of Capt. Francisco Baez De Benavides Lopez and Isabel Martinez Guajardo Navarro. Francisco was the son of Gonzalo Baez de Benavides and Marta Lopez. Marta was the daughter of Melchor Gonzalez and Ana Alvarez.

In the book "Los Benavides De Revilla" by Jose De La Pena he states that historical records indicate that Don Francisco Baez de Benavides first came to the Mexican state of Nuevo Leon circa 1619. The records indicate that he arrived in Mexico in 1594 from Orotava, Tenerife, Canary Islands. In Mexico he married Isabel Martinez Guajardo. He was a rancher and a well known Indian fighter. He also founded several mines in the state of Nuevo Leon near Cerralvo where he settled about 1620. He later became "alcalde mayor" of Monterrey in 1642.

So my Gabriela Alvarez became well rounded in my eyes! She became someone that I could almost see. Now I had another ancestor from the Canary Islands. I was putting flesh on her bones as Professor Israel Cavazos told us in his speeches. I had a new female ancestor that I had uncovered. What a great feeling to feel as if you alone have discovered an ancestor. Flesh of my flesh opening so many new lines that I didn't know that I had. I had always known of her but never really knew about her. All these new people are now my ancestors. Wow!

What is so amazing to me is that I really learned that Gabriela was here and that she did contribute to all of my family. I knew very little about her when I started this quest but I ended learning a lot about myself from this wonderful lady.

What I like to tell the readers is that you can find information on your relatives in places that you might have never thought to look in. I read a lot and sometimes I read family histories that I thought didn't concern me but a lot of times I have found connections to my direct ancestors on family histories that I didn't think were related to me. Don't give up and keep looking!

Irma Longoria Cavazos