



CABRILLO'S VANITY

I went to photograph this arch off the California coast last winter to use as a reference in a painting I was working on. It's named after the first European to explore the coast. When he passed this point in the Fall of 1542 he saw an apparition through the arch that persuaded him to turn the ship around and abandon any further explorations. Due to a phenomena involving the sunlight, the angle of the water, sea spray and the arch effect, sometimes you can see a reflection in the opening, which apparently Cabrillo did.

Recently I was nearby and went to see the arch again. When I arrived, it was no longer there, it had collapsed. Then I recalled having seen it collapse on my first visit. I don't know why I forgot having seen it collapse. These are photographs of the before and after. I tried basically to get the same shot on the second visit for comparison (following page).

I remember now hearing the loud crack while I had the camera up to my eye, and then seeing the thing collapse partially through the viewfinder. I must have taken this one just the second before because I remember at the time being concerned whether I had gotten it or not in time. As it turned out I did and so was able to use it to paint from. So this is the last photograph taken of Cabrillo's arch.

