

# Ambushed by Originarios

Retrieved Friday 19th of May 2017 06:03:07 PM  
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GUALFIN, ARGENTINA – We rode out to one of the high valleys on Sunday.

Leading the way were the ranch foreman, Gustavo, and his son, Agustín.

Agustín is 10 years old. But he is already a *gaucho* – sure of himself on a horse... unafraid of the cows... ready to work sunup to sundown, as long as he can be outside.

We passed ruined stone houses and terraces where Indians once planted corn and potatoes; some may have been abandoned a thousand years ago.

“Not this one,” said Gustavo, pointing up the hill.

“My grandfather lived here as a boy. They had a small alfalfa pasture in front. There was more rain back then.”

It took about three hours – up the riverbed and over a low mountain to a small pasture surrounded by mountains. The previous owners had built a tiny stone house on the side of the pasture... and a stone corral about the size of a quarter of a football field.

Nearby was a small crowd...

## Recommended Link



### [Buy these “penny defense stocks” before June 30 budget deadline](#)

On June 30, the Pentagon jackpot will begin... sparking the biggest military buildup since World War II. A handful of tiny firms called “penny defense stocks” are at the front lines of this gold rush. In World War II, investors had the chance to turn \$1,000 into \$550,000. Today, a similar situation is brewing that could give folks the best chance at these kinds of historical returns. We’ve tapped our insider network and honed in on the best four of these explosive stocks. [Click here for the full story](#)

## Bareback Riders

Gustavo’s extended family – grandparents and children along with brothers, sisters, cousins, and wives – had gathered for the annual roundup of the semi-wild cattle living in the area. They were preparing their camp.

As we approached, two boys – about 12 or 13 years old – galloped up on horses, riding bareback. The two came to us, introduced themselves, and shook our hands.

In the camp, set amid ruins of what must have been a house, meat was roasting on a fire. Bales of blankets were piled in a corral. Bags and boxes of food sat on top of low stone walls.

We recognized most of the faces. The *originarios* – the locals claiming indigenous rights to our land – no longer even tipped their hats. But this was a friendly crowd.

The men put out their hands. The women and children turned up their left cheeks for a kiss. There was Gustavo’s mother, Marta. There were several of his half-brothers and cousins.

There was also Vasili from one of the *originario* families. He hooked up with one of the *gauchos*’ daughters and came to work for the ranch; his family ostracized him.

José and his wife, Silvia – who is nearly dead – were also there.

“Don Bill asks how you are,” a sister shouted in her ear after we greeted her.

of the Clan

And there was old Don Domingo, of the clan, sitting on a boulder near the small house.

Hunched over with age, we wondered how he got there. Some walked. Some rode horses. We were surprised he could do either.

Don Domingo took our hands warmly.

“I’m so glad you came, patrón.”

For the next three days, young and old will sleep out in the open. They will eat around a campfire. They’ll get up at 4 a.m., fan out into the mountains, and chase the unruly cows until nightfall.

“I don’t see any cows at all,” we remarked to Gustavo.

“They’re there. They’re behind the rocks and in the ravines. But it’s a lot of work to find them.”

There are said to be about 300 cows – scattered over about 5,000 acres of rough country. They must all be driven into the corral, where they will be vaccinated, branded, castrated, and tagged.

A few of the young males will be herded down to the corral in front of our house; they will be the “rent” payment for the year. The rest will be released back into the hills, where they are on their own for the next 12 months.

#### *Recommended Link*



#### **[“The #1 Investment I recommend you make right now” – Chris Mayer](#)**

This is a big secret behind some of the world’s greatest stock pickers’ fortunes – but not many people know how to take advantage. In this FREE event, Chris will share this “success formula” with you. **[Click here for the details and to join this FREE event before it expires.](#)**

#### Indigenous Roots

We bought the ranch 10 years ago. There were no claims, disputes, or set-asides regarding the title.

Then a political movement began.

Activists arrived from the city and told the locals the land could be theirs. All they had to do was rediscover their indigenous roots.

Now, a group of them claims to have revived the “Diaguita community” – a reference to a group of pre-Inca natives. The ranch should be theirs, they say.

There are no property or historical records to support their claim. The Inca conquered the area at least 100 years before the Spanish arrived. The Diaguita language disappeared. The people were dispersed.

No “tribe” remains. And it is not clear whether any of the people living here are descendants of the Diaguita.

The fellow who calls himself the “chief,” for example, lives in a town two hours away. He is the son of a German woman. His father – a local – refused to recognize him. He says he has no connection to the Diaguita.

## Planning an Ambush

Genuine or not... the *originarios* are planning an ambush.

Last week, we got a summons.

We are to report to a local administrative building for a mandatory “mediation” with the *originarios*.

The proximate cause of this dispute: We put in a water line in one of our pastures. The plastic pipe runs almost two miles from a small spring to a watering trough so that the animals don’t have to walk across the valley to get a drink.

The hitch: The *originarios* are claiming the field belongs to them.

“I’m glad we got the summons,” we told our lawyer.

“I’d like a chance to set the record straight. The people here who are claiming the ranch are not even from here. They came from the Puña [the high desert that stretches from the mountains in back of our house to Chile].

“If they can claim title, so can any. So why should they get it? We don’t care if they are *originarios* or not. We’ll respect their rights. But they’ve got to respect ours.”

“Yes... and you think they care what you say?” our lawyer replied.

“You’re walking into a trap. You’re a foreigner. A *rich* foreigner. You barely speak Spanish... and you don’t understand the local dialect. Sometimes, even I can’t understand you. You’ll lose.

“Besides, they know perfectly well where they came from. They know they don’t have a leg to stand on, legally.

“But this is a political issue. There are about 125 potential *originarios* living on the ranch. Luckily, most of them are still with us. But there’s just one you. And you don’t vote here.”

## *Originario* Shtick

The valley is full of decent people.

All share more or less the same culture and DNA. No knows, more than a couple generations back, where they came from. They have Spanish names; you can see that many have very little Spanish blood.

Most of them respect each other’s rights, live cooperatively, and do win-win deals with one another.

Here at the ranch, most are friendly and helpful. Our *gauchos* walk as much as two hours a day to get back and forth to their jobs. They work hard with little oversight.

Others are self-sufficient. They plant corn and potatoes on their little plots. They weave sweaters and braid lassos.

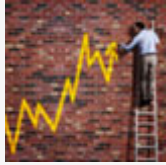
Then, once a year, they round up their herds in the mountains and make their token rent payments – one rangy cow for every 20 adult animals in the herd.

But a few have seized this *originario* shtick, which, they believe, gives them the power to take almost any property they want. No need to be friendly or cooperative; they should get what they want by right of birth.

No need to mark their cattle, they say. All the cattle should be theirs.

They even have a list of all the ranches and farms they believe should be theirs. It covers almost the entire valley... our ranch included.

### Recommended Link



### [The Stock Rally Begins NOW](#)

If you feel you've missed out on stocks over the last 8 years, don't worry... the biggest gains will likely come in the next 24 months. [Here's how to play the situation.](#)

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So now what?

Trust recedes. Win-win deals decline. Learning slows. We are reluctant to invest more in the ranch. And we hesitate to rent land to local people for fear they may announce they are *originarios* and claim title over it.

We pay a lawyer to represent us. We spend time responding to *originario* attacks, bringing in the police and suing the ringleaders.

Now, almost every large property in the valley is for sale. But there are no buyers. No investors. Who would want to take on so much trouble... and so much risk?

Progress here has slowed down.

In one of the poorest parts of South America, people are getting poorer.

Regards,