Friars, Soldiers, and Reformers
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Published by University of Arizona Press

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Father Garcés took with him on this apostolic labor [his entrada of 1771] no more company than the fervent zeal that guided him to undertake it. Carrying as weapons a crucifix and breviary and mounted on his Bucephalus, he traveled for more than two months.

Captain Bernardo de Urrea to Viceroy
Bucareli, Altar,
December 9, 1772

Although Captain Juan Bautista de Anza was always opposed to the entradas Father Garcés was making, when he saw that it would be feasible to reach the new settlements of Monterey, and that this expedition could bring him many honors, he resolved, at the urging of Father Garcés, to write the viceroy.

Fray Francisco Antonio Barbastro, Compendio
CONCURRENT EVENTS

1774  Louis XVI ascends the French throne.

1775  Daniel Boone and his axmen cut the Wilderness Road to the Kentucky River.
Rebellious Indians at San Diego in Alta California martyr Fray Luis Jayme.
Benedict Arnold's attempt to capture Quebec aborts.

1776  The British evacuate Boston.
Fray Francisco Atanasio Domínguez and Fray Silvestre Vélez de Escalante explore the Great Basin in an unsuccessful bid to reach California.
2,500 North Carolina regulars and militiamen rout the Middle Cherokee towns.
Adam Smith lays the foundation of classical political economy with his *Wealth of Nations*; James Watt's steam engine is put to practical use; Edward Gibbon begins publication of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. 

EVER SINCE 1701 when the Jesuit explorer Eusebio Francisco Kino crossed the lower Colorado in a man-sized Indian storage basket lashed to a raft and spent the night on the opposite bank, overland communication and supply between Sonora and California had been a goal of frontier promoters and imperial strategists. A generation later Captain Juan Bautista de Anza the elder pledged to explore the Colorado and beyond. In the 1740s Father Jacobo Sedelmayr had exchanged gifts with the Yumas. But not until Russians and Englishmen supplied the requisite threat did the Spanish government move.

In 1768 José de Gálvez had arrived on the scene convinced that he could transform barren Baja California into a base for the occupation of Alta California. But the peninsula beat him. To nourish San Diego and Monterey would require supply by sea more than a thousand miles up the Pacific coast against prevailing currents — or a road overland from Sonora.¹

On their march north to San Diego soldiers of Gaspar de Portolá’s contingent had startled some Indians. Word of the encounter, of “white men with long clothing and a wooden thing also long with iron on top,” passed from tribe to tribe eastward across the desert. Anza the younger heard about it at Tubac and Father Garcés while trekking westward from San Xavier.² Both the captain and the friar recognized the import — by retracing the route this news had traveled one could intersect the trail of Portolá’s men and link Nueva California with Sonora. The friar took the initiative.

Anza thought Garcés a fool to wander alone and unprotected among the heathens. Worse, this simple rustic from Spain who had such confidence in his ability to get along with Indians could inadvertently stir up the tribes or get himself killed. Anza had enough to worry about without a roving apostle.

The veteran captain of Tubac further resented the friar’s constant meddling in military affairs, his recommendations concerning presidial locations and strategy. Move the Tubac and Terrenate garrisons forward, urged Garcés, carry the war to the Apaches and stop hiding behind the missions, open the Gila route to California and New Mexico, drive off Englishman and Russian. The missionary defended himself. It was not so strange, he averred in a letter to Viceroy Bucareli, “that a poor friar should involve himself in these matters, since they all pertain to the preservation of my pueblos and to the service of both Majesties which we all should promote.”

The way Anza felt about the missions, or professed to feel late in 1772 when he branded them useless, prejudicial, and tyrannical, must have affected his relations with Garcés and the other friars. Even the two soldiers stationed at San Xavier proved a source of friction. Fray Francisco thought the military,


not his poor mission, should provision them. Anza disagreed and threatened to recall them. Garcés complained to Bucareli.²

At the same time, the road to California drew them together. It stirred Captain Anza's family pride and offered him a dramatic opportunity to serve the crown and win promotion. Father Garcés, by his well-publicized wanderings, had shown the way to the Colorado: the Indians on its banks were friendly, the river fordable, Monterey only days beyond. It was the lonely labor of Garcés, the Franciscans proclaimed, that inspired Anza to propose an expedition.⁴ Viceroy Bucareli took a personal interest. He fretted when copies of the Garcés diaries did not reach him promptly. High-level hearings, reports, and more reports followed, and finally viceregal approval. Anza and Garcés with a small pilot expedition would attempt to open the road.⁵

Anza had no trouble filling his quota of twenty volunteers from the Tubac garrison. In December, 1773, the proud, Sonora-born frontier officer rode to the mining boomtown of Cieneguilla to meet the Spaniard who had been appointed interim governor of the province, Lieutenant Colonel Francisco Antonio Crespo. To cover for the men he was taking with him Anza wanted twenty replacements, presidials, not raw recruits. Crespo complied. He had orders from the viceroy. Besides, detaching men from existing garrisons saved the crown the additional cost of recruits.⁶

Even with Governor Crespo's support Captain Anza had to forage for provisions and animals — pinole, flour, beans, tools, ammunition (to be used only in self-defense), glass beads and tobacco for the heathens, 65 beef cattle, 140 riding horses, and enough pack mules. The plan was to proceed north to San Xavier and leave from there with Father Garcés and his Gila Pima friends leading the way over a route he had already traveled. It miscarried.

On January 2, 1774, four days before the date set for departure, a large Apache raiding party with an unerring scent for horseflesh galloped down on the Tubac caballada. “Even though the guard defended it with the utmost vigor and courage,” wrote Anza, “they could not prevent them from stealing some one hundred and thirty animals.”

If the friars were discreet, they kept their sarcastic observations to themselves. Anza was in no mood. The plan had to be changed. The column, mounted on what animals were left, would head southwest for the Altar Valley

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⁴Barbastro, Compendio.

⁵For details and documents, see ACE, vol. 1, pp. 43–62, and vol. 5, pp. 1–108. Bolton exaggerated the spirit of comradeship and cooperation between Anza and Garcés.

⁶Anza to Bucareli, Tubac, Jan. 3, 1774, AGN, PI, 237. Crespo to Viceroy Martín de Mayorga, México, March 29, 1780, ibid., 258.
in hopes of recouping the lost animals on the way. That, Garcés pointed out, meant a detour of fifty-two leagues, some one hundred and thirty-five miles.

Saturday, January 8, swearing mingled with blessings, friars with muleteers. Dogs, children, and chickens scurried, keeping barely out from under foot. They were about to set forth. That morning all the participants jammed into the Tubac church: Anza and his twenty presidials, looking as much like regulars in His Majesty's service as they ever would, one California soldier sent by Bucareli to show the way from San Diego to Monterey, an interpreter who knew Piman, an Indian carpenter, five muleteers, two of Anza's servants, and two friars. As a companion for Garcés, Father President Ramos had chosen gritty Fray Juan Díaz, survivor of almost six years among the unruly natives of Caborca. Moreover, Díaz' hand was legible, he knew something of astronomical observation, and he could draw a map. The thirty-fourth member of the expedition, Sebastián Tarabal, an Indian runaway from San Gabriel in California, who had just made the crossing from west to east, would join them at Altar, "one of those rare occurrences that Providence bestows."

Three more friars assisted at Mass that morning, Tumacacori's Clemente and Moreno, and another member of the mission of 1769, Fray Juan Gorgoll, who since 1772 had served as compaño to Díaz at Caborca. Tall, red-faced, with a small wart on his nose, Gorgoll would fill in for Garcés at San Xavier. The congregation heard the Holy Trinity and the Blessed Virgin Mary in her Immaculate Conception proclaimed as guardians of the expedition. After Mass, Tubac resembled a mob scene. By one o'clock the column had formed up. According to Father Díaz, "a vigorous volley and repeated 'Vivas' well manifested the joy at the auspicious beginning of a journey which may yield such glory to God, happiness to souls, and honor, merit, and luster to our Catholic monarch."

They camped that first night almost within sight of the presidio, a league north at the ford where the road to San Xavier crossed the meandering river. Next day, skirting round the craggy Tumacacorís they struck southwest for Arivaca, site of the visita destroyed in the Pima revolt of 1751.

7Anza to Bucareli, Tubac, Jan. 3, 1774, two letters, ibid., 237. Bolton, ACE, vol. 1, pp. 63–64, gives the date of the raid as Dec. 2, 1773. Father Díaz confirmed the Jan. 2 date. Father Junípero Serra reported that two raids took place and that a sergeant and some muleteers were killed. Ibid., vol. 5, p. 123. Serra was right. Apaches had indeed hit Tubac early in Dec. for a hundred head of cattle. An unnamed sergeant and seventeen men overtook the thieves "in the ruggedest part" of the Sierra de Santa Catalina. Over the soldiers' protests the sergeant ordered the column to dismount and attack. He paid straightaway with his life, and the enemy carried off three wounded, presumably alive. In Feb., while Anza was gone, ten men on the way from Terrenate to Tubac to relieve the substitute detachment rode into an Apache ambush. Two died, the rest were wounded, but not before they had killed the enemy leader, a much-scared war chief, along with two of his braves. Crespo to Bucareli, Horcasitas, Jan. 23 and Feb. 25, 1774, AGN, PI, 96. Extractos, México, April 26 and June 26, 1774, AGI, Guad., 513.

8For the diaries of Anza, Garcés, and Díaz, see ACE, vol. 2. A list of 17 of the Tubac soldiers is in ibid., vol. 5, p. 203. Gorgoll made entries in the Tumacácori register Jan. 4 and 22, and March 19 (the patronal feast), 1774. DCB.
Twenty weeks later they were back. They had seen the Pacific. They had done it, linked Sonora with California overland. In Mexico City, Viceroy Bucareli exulted.

Although don Juan Bautista de Anza, father of the present Anza . . . suggested the plan, its execution was reserved by Providence for his son. . . . I consider the merit of this officer deserving of a reward.

He recommended a lieutenant-colonelcy, and for "each of the soldiers who so faithfully accompanied him in this prodigious undertaking" a life-long monthly pay raise.⁹

Ex-Texas governor Hugo O'Conor, "capitán colorado" the Indians called him because of his ruddy Irish face and his red hair, was not that interested in a link between Sonora and California. More important to the defense-minded comandante-inspector of all the presidios was the location of Tubac's garrison.

The royal presidial Reglamento of 1772, a result of the Marqués de Rubí's general inspection of 1766–1768, called for a realignment of the cordon from the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of California. The invading barbarians—mainly Apaches—must be turned back. That task absorbed O'Conor, as well it might have, but in the opinion of expansionists it limited his vision. If he moved a presidio, it was to place it and the line in a more effective defensive posture, not to expand the empire. That he left to Viceroy Bucareli.¹⁰

The red captain applied himself first to the central and eastern sectors of the frontier, reforming the line and chasing hostiles.¹¹ In 1774 from his headquarters in Chihuahua he sent an advance man to Sonora, Deputy Inspector Antonio de Bonilla, who reached Tubac in May just before Captain Anza was due in from California.

Eager to get on with his business, the widely traveled young staff officer sent a half dozen Tubac soldiers to intercept Anza. At Tucson before daylight on May 26 they handed their captain an order to report immediately. What was so urgent? They could not say. So Anza, the six soldiers, and Father Diaz, who assured them that he could keep up, rode light for Tubac, fifty miles, and reined up in front of the captain's quarters at sunset. The rest of the weary caravan made its appearance amid vivas, dust, and tears next day at noon. Whether the officious Bonilla joined them in the church for a Mass of thanksgiving no one said.

A spit-and-polish regular army man, Bonilla deplored the unmilitary disarray he found on the Sonora frontier. In his general report, which Governor Crespo labeled a pack of extreme exaggerations, he painted a uniformly dismal

⁹Bucareli to Arriaga, México, June 26, 1774, ACE, vol. 5, pp. 175–82.
¹⁰Navarro García, Galvez, pp. 264–66.
picture. He degraded the troops and depreciated the enemy. How could the ragged presidial, ill-armed, ill-trained, abused by his officers, hope to defeat the Apache? Only by discipline, subordination, and training. After all, an army was only as good as its discipline.

Deployment, too, exercised the deputy inspector. Though the Reglamento left the site for Tubac's garrison open to further study, the Marqués de Rubí had suggested the valley of Arivaca, scene of Bernardo de Urrea's great victory over the Pima rebels in 1752. Bonilla disagreed. He described the valley eight leagues west of Tubac as "large but marshy and unhealthful," better for horses than men. The only advantage he saw was that the silver mines in the area, "La Longoreña, La Dura, etc.,” could be worked again. On the other hand, "the Tubac settlement and the mission of Tumacácori will be utterly helpless and without a prayer, and they will be depopulated as soon as the presidio is transferred to Arivaca."

Captain Anza gave Bonilla something more to think about. To protect the newly opened route to Alta California the western anchor of the presidial cordon should be set at the junction of the Colorado and Gila Rivers, well above the Rubí line. Therefore, to keep the new line from sagging, Tubac too should move north. Though Bonilla would recommend Santa Cruz, site of an abandoned Sobáipuri ranchería in the San Pedro Valley near present-day Fairbank, he left the ultimate decision to Comandante-Inspector O'Conor. 12

Anza was impatient. Bonilla’s presence galled him. He knew a hero’s welcome awaited him in Mexico City. While the deputy inspector counted lances and shields and muskets, Anza set Fray Juan Díaz to drawing a map, a graphic record of "what we have accomplished." He meant to present it and the diaries to Bucareli in person, as the viceroy had ordered. Finally Bonilla left. Thank God. But a few days later, a courier rode in with "an urgent and secret order" for Captain Anza. He could scarcely believe it. The inspector was summoning him to Terrenate. Now what?

Taking none of his papers, Anza rode the forty-five miles to Terrenate only to find himself placed in temporary command. The unruly Joseph Antonio de Vildósola had been sacked. Bonilla instructed Anza to maintain proper military order until a replacement could be sent. Did he have any idea what the road to California meant to Viceroy Bucareli? But it was no use. On June 8, 1774, a dejected Anza wrote the viceroy from Terrenate. 13 For two months he would be stranded there.

Bucareli fumed. How dare they? At once he wrote Commandant-Inspector O’Conor and the governor of Sonora. Let Captain Anza go immediately.

12 Antonio Bonilla to O’Conor, Informe sobre la Provincia de Sonora, Chihuahua, Aug. 14, 1774, AGN, PI, 88. Bonilla called the present-day San Pedro River the Terrenate and the valley at Santa Cruz the Valle de los Santos Ángeles Custodios. He used the name San Pedro only for a section of the river’s headwaters to which he ordered Terrenate moved. O’Conor would countermand the order and place Terrenate, not Tubac, at Santa Cruz. Crespo to Bucareli, Horcasitas, Jan. 16, 1775, ibid. O’Conor to Bucareli, Carrizal, Nov. 6, 1774, ibid.

13 Anza to Bucareli, Terrenate, June 8, 1774, ACE, vol. 5, pp. 150–52. Crespo to Bucareli, Horcasitas, June 18, 1774, AGN, PI, 96.
"There is no project of greater importance in this province today than the one Anza has just executed with such care."14 The viceroy had ordered him to Mexico City and come he would. Who did Bonilla think he was? By the end of August, at the height of the rainy season when travel was worst, Anza finally hit the road south.

That same month Father Garcés had shown up at Tumacácori to ask a favor. Would Fathers Clemente and Moreno mind copying in a legible hand the last section of his diary? They agreed, dividing the task between them even though Moreno was the better penman. Garcés had problems enough trying to make out his own notes.

Anza had left Garcés May 21 in a Cocómaricopa ranchería. Because the viceroy had asked the college to investigate the possibility of direct communications between New Mexico and California, Garcés intended to send a letter to the friars of New Mexico from the Gila via intervening tribes. When the Indians on the Gila who were warring with the Yavapais refused to take the letter, he had ridden alone and trusting northwest to the Halchidhomas. These people lived above the Yumas on the Colorado and maintained friendly intercourse with both Yavapais and Hopis. He ascended the river for several days, gave the letter to an old Halchidhoma, and headed back convinced that the best route to Monterey lay well north of Anza's.15

The captain would present the diary to Bucareli. But because Garcés did not trust Anza he wrote the viceroy himself from Tumacácori, August 17, 1774. Anza had assured him in front of witnesses that he favored founding at least seven or eight new missions. What story he would tell at court though, Garcés did not know, since "he says something different in different company."16

The people of Tubac and Tumacácori could scarcely believe it. The governor of the province here? Not likely. The Seri wars, administration, and roaming Apaches had long kept the Spanish governors of Sonora in the south. But Lieutenant Colonel Francisco Antonio Crespo, career officer of the infantry regiment of Granada, was of a different stripe. He would see the northern Pimería and the Río Gila for himself. He would teach the barbaric Apaches a lesson, by God.

While the redoubtable governor chased shadows to the north with half the Tubac garrison, a reported two hundred and fifty to three hundred Apaches attacked the presidial caballada at dawn November 18, 1774, taking fifty-five head and gravely wounding an Indian auxiliary. That night they came again,

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16 Garcés to Cartagena, Jan. 12, 1775, CC, 201.16. Garcés to Bucareli, Tumacácori, Aug. 17, 1774, AGN, PI, 23. Anza was miffed because Garcés did not report directly to him. Anza to Bucareli, Terrenate, Aug. 6 and 7, 1774, ibid., 237.
but to no avail. The herd had been driven inside the walls of the presidio and
the twenty-six soldiers reinforced by settlers.17

A week later, while Captain Anza belatedly relished the adulation reserved
for heroes at the court of México, Governor Crespo addressed Comandante-
Inspector O’Conor from the crude adobe presidio of Tubac.

Desirous of acquiring a clear knowledge of this frontier and its environs,
and of punishing the enemy in some rancherías which I was told are near
the confluence of the San Pedro and Gila Rivers, I decided to set out for
those places the 13th of this month. Even though I did not succeed in the
second objective through the bad luck of being seen before I arrived by
some Indians who were out hunting, I consider it imperative to report
to Your Lordship my thoughts about that country and the new discovery
of Monterey which might necessitate changing the placement of . . .
presidios.

Father Garcés had briefed the governor thoroughly. The Tubac garrison
should be transferred north a hundred miles to the confluence of the San Pedro
and the Gila, near today’s Winkelman, right on the Apaches’ doorstep. If the
hostiles tried to pass to the west, the Gila Pimas and the Pápago would pick
them up — the Gila Pima governor had in fact led a delegation to Tubac to
boast of recently having killed twenty of the enemy.

Terrenate should move north thirty-five miles down the San Pedro Valley
to Santa Cruz, Bonilla’s choice for Tubac. Fronteras, farther east, would be
placed just where the Reglamento prescribed, at San Bernardino within sight
of the Chiricahua Mountains. All needed bigger garrisons. Placed thus they
could block three major Apache raiding trails and eventually harry the enemy
out of the land. The governor felt obliged to report his thoughts to O’Conor
“before the physical construction of presidios is begun.”18

At Altar in mid-December Crespo set down for Viceroy Bucareli his feel­
ings about the second, larger overland expedition to California being planned
at court. He favored the more northerly route crossing the Colorado above the
Yumas and thence directly to Monterey, the route Garcés thought best. His
Talk with the Gila Pimas had convinced him that they should have two missions
immediately. He agreed that the Yuma crossing and the port of San Francisco
had to be secured, but before taking settlers. So much for the road to Cali­
ifornia opened by Juan Bautista de Anza. Governor Crespo now made his own
bid for glory.

From the Río Colorado, “according to reports and to conjectures of the
Reverend Father Garcés,” by traveling north and east one could follow the
route of Indian trade goods to the Hopi pueblos and to New Mexico. “I think
it desirable that on the return from Monterey these new explorations should
be undertaken . . . even if the results we hope for are not realized, a great deal

17 Crespo to Bucareli, Cieneguilla, Dec. 19, 1774, ibid., 96.
18 Crespo to O’Conor, Tubac, Nov. 25, 1774, ibid., 88. Fr. Juan Díaz to Bucareli, Ures,
March 21, 1775, ACE, vol. 5, pp. 276–90.
of knowledge of those countries will result." Soldiers, an engineer or two, a surgeon, and of course Father Garcés, should go. Though modesty prevented him from requesting command of the enterprise for himself, he made it clear to the viceroy that he, Francisco Antonio Crespo, stood ready.19

The ruddy Gaspar de Clemente and his shorter, pale, and pock-marked compañero Joseph Matías Moreno kept up their ministry at Tumacácori and Tubac throughout the eventful year of 1774. They made do on a single three hundred and fifty-peso stipend. Fortunately the harvests were better. Between them that year they baptized twenty-nine persons — Pimas and Pápago in the two surviving pueblos, gente de razón from Tubac, several of the Indian slaves known as Nijoras traded in the Pimería by the natives of the Gila or Colorado, even a couple of Apache children taken earlier “in just war” by Captain Anza.20 By early 1775 both friars had left Tumacácori.

Clemente, not yet thirty, had lasted two years and several months; he apparently went back to the college, his health broken. For some fifteen or sixteen years he lived the ascetic, disciplined routine within its walls, then dropped from the rolls. Moreno, also listed as accidentado at one stage, stayed in the missions.21 He labored at Caborca, and with Fray Pedro Font built the stocky, vaulted church at San Diego de Pitiquito.22 In 1780 he joined Fray Juan Díaz on the Río Colorado. Less than a year later he, Díaz, Garcés, and a fourth friar died in the Yuma massacre.

The two young missionaries who took over at Tumacácori early in 1775 had both seen an Indian before. Fray Pedro Antonio de Arriquibar had spent a year in Baja California, Fray Tomas Eixarch about the same length of time in Texas.

Almost thirty, chunky and full in the face, Arriquibar was a Basque born in the parish of Santa María Ceánuri two or three hours’ ride southeast of Bilbao on the highroad to Vitoria. “The terrain . . . is hilly and broken with very sparse meadows; in general it is of poor quality and would produce little or nothing were it not for the unceasing labor of the inhabitants.”23 Dense oak growth, clear streams, wooden bridges, apples, rain and humidity, every shade of green — the scene of his youth could hardly have contrasted more with the desert Pimería where Fray Pedro was destined to spend the remainder of his life — forty-five years.

19 Crespo to Bucareli, Altar, Dec. 15, 1774, ibid., pp. 238–48. Bucareli shelved the proposal for the time being: he wanted more information. [Bucareli] to O’Conor, México, Feb. 21, 1775, AGN, PI, 88. Anza also offered to lead such an expedition Anza to Bucareli, México, Dec. 8, 1774, ibid., 237.


21 Clemente’s final extant entry in the Tumacácori register, a marriage, is dated Jan. 23, 1775; Moreno’s, a baptism, Dec. 22, 1774. DCB. Lists of personnel, ACQ, M.

22 Fr. Francisco Moyano, Noticias de las misiones que ocupan los religiosos del colegio de la Santa Cruz de Querétaro, Oquitoa, May 18, ’803, AGI, Mex., 2736.

23 Madoz, Diccionario, vol. 6, p. 277.
Arriquibar had entered the Franciscan novitiate in Bilbao at seventeen. Seven years later in Aránzazu he volunteered for the missionary college of San Fernando in Mexico City. Since 1769 he had traveled perhaps ten thousand miles — from the north of Spain to México, from there to Baja California with delays and digressions, then in 1772 when the Dominicans took over, back to Mexico City, in 1774 by transfer to the Querétaro college, and finally to Tumacácori where he hung his broad-brimmed gray hat at least as early as February, 1775.  

Tomás Eixarch, thirty-one, had black hair, black eyes, and a sallow complexion. He stood no more than 5 feet 2 inches. His hometown, the villa of Liria northwest of the Mediterranean port city of Valencia, reposed in a nearly flat agricultural belt. The weather was temperate and generally clear. In 1759 fifteen-year-old Tomás from “the delicious, happy, and fruitful countryside of Liria” was received into the Order of Friars Minor in Valencia. Ten years hence he sailed with the mission for the college of Querétaro. By 1772 he was in Texas, compañero to a veteran missionary at San Juan Capistrano in the San Antonio cluster. Later that year when the Queretarans gave up their Texas missions he traveled back to the college, only to set out again in 1774 for Sonora. At Tumacácori he ranked his portly Basque compañero.  

In May, 1775, less than a year since his previous inspection, Father Visitor Antonio Ramos dismounted once again at Tumacácori. There were abrazos. Fray Antonio and Fray Tomás had been neighbors in Texas. The new Franciscan commissary general for New Spain, Fray Antonio Fernández, had called for a progress report on the missions administered by the college of Querétaro. What was their population now? Had there been any spiritual progress among the Indians since the friars took over? Any increase in temporalities? 

Ninety-one Indians, Pimas and Papagos, resided at Tumacácori, down seven from the year before, as well as twenty-six gente de razón, up seven. At Calabazas there were one hundred forty-one Pimas and Papagos. In that lone visita lived “the Indians of Guevavi and Sonoita, desolated by the furious hostility of the Apaches.” According to Father Eixarch many Papagos had been guided to the mission through the apostolic labors of the friars. All the Indians of both villages were well instructed in the Holy Mysteries. “They also recite the catechism in Spanish, though they understand little, for there is almost no comprehension of said language (except in a few cases).” 

Economically things could have been worse. No one denied that Apache raiding over the past seven years had caused a decline in Tumacácori’s community property. Still, the livestock count, thanks to constant vigilance, now stood at about a hundred head of cattle, twelve mares and as many horses,


25 Arricivita, Lista, 1769. Madoz, Diccionario, vol. 10, pp. 308–12. Lists of personnel, ACQ, M. Eixarch, who also wrote his name Eyxarch, made his first and last entries in the surviving Tumacácori books March 14 and Oct. 1, 1775: both were for baptisms. DCB.
and a thousand sheep. Enough grain and produce were grown to feed the mission. Proceeds from the sale of surplus seed went to clothe the Indians and furnish the churches. The mission's business agent, or sindico, probably Interpreter Ramírez or one of the other gente de razón, had in his possession three hundred and fifty pesos from the sale of provisions to the presidials and settlers at Tubac. That all this was true Fray Tomás swore at Tumacácori, May 12, 1775.26

For the friars at Tumacácori, Tubac was both a blessing and a burden. A settlement of three to five hundred persons so close did serve as a deterrent to Apache annihilation and a market for mission produce. On the other hand, the settlers and soldiers, with their drinking, gambling, swearing, and wenching, set anything but a good Christian example for the neophytes.

Fathers Eixarch and Arriquibar, who were supposed to be missionaries entre infieles, now ministered to more non-Indians than Indians. That year, 1775, of the eighteen baptisms they performed, fourteen were for residents of Tubac.

For better or worse Tumacácori and Tubac were one community. They shared the same ministers. Families from the presidio mingled, licitly and otherwise, with the socially inferior mission Indians. Many of them had Indian godchildren and compadres, though by no means did that imply equality. Rather, it was a Christian duty.

Tumacácori and Tubac shared the same river. When its volume dwindled Captain Anza enforced irrigation control. One week the Indians of Tumacácori diverted the flow into their acequia madre, or main ditch, the next week they let it through downstream to the presidio's dam.27 Mission and presidial herds grazed together. When the mission sold maize, wheat, or livestock to the presidio, some small percentage of Tubac's 20,670-peso annual military payroll ended up at Tumacácori. Petty trade was almost constant, with transactions mostly in goods, not cash. Unless the missionaries intervened, to hear them tell it, the Indian nearly always got the bad end of the bargain.

The specific duties of Tumacácori's minister in his capacity as military chaplain had been spelled out in the presidial Reglamento of 1772. In addition to administering the sacraments to military personnel and civilians, keeping the records, and going on campaign when requested to do so, the chaplain was to provide

spiritual aid and comfort to the officers and soldiers whenever they are sick or wounded, likewise gentle admonition regarding defects of personal

26Visita of Tumacácori, May 12, 1775, Libro de patentes, ACQ; Kessell, ed., "Father Eixarch and the Visitations at Tumacácori, May 12, 1775," The Kiva, vol. 30 (1965), pp. 77–81. Six weeks earlier a statement of the Sonora missions' monies for annual expenses showed Tumacácori, still listed as Guevavi, with 580 pesos 5 reales. Atí, San Xavier, and Cocóspera were poorer, San Ignacio more than three times as rich. Razón del estado, March 30, 1775, CC, 201.81.

conduct in their homes toward their wives, children, and family. If (after judicious inquiry) it should be found that some person of the company is living in scandal or bringing in lewd women, secretly or openly, he will inform the captain, or whomever is commanding the company in his place, in order that the most prompt remedy may be applied to prevent such abuses, punishing the guilty according to the circumstances of the case and expelling such women immediately with the warning that if they should again be found guilty of the same offense in the company or presidio, they will be punished more severely.28

The two friars continued to bury victims of the unrestrained Apaches. That June, Lieutenant Oliva, commanding in Anza's absence, lamented three such casualties that need not have been. The presidial horses and mules had been grazing not far from Calabazas. The corporal of the detachment guarding them had orders to fall back on that pueblo at the first sign of a raid. He chose instead to be a hero.

When Apaches appeared over the hill he divided his force and sent some of the men with the herd, which made Calabazas safely. He and the others would kill a few savages. But there were too many, and the corporal died for his bravado. Denied any animals, "their main objective," the Apaches took off. Near Terrenate they reappeared, killed a woman and child and later a soldier, but got no horses. They would be back.29

In the hot, sticky month of August, 1775, Tubac was astir. As chaplains of the garrison and vitally interested members of the community, Fathers Eixarch and Arriquibar shared the anticipation. Would the government really deactivate the presidio and transfer the garrison? What provision was to be made for the protection of settlers and mission? Soon they might know. The famous capitán colorado, don Hugo O'Conor, commandant-inspector of all the presidios on the northern frontier, was on his way from Altar.

For ten days O'Conor and his staff took stock of the Tubac garrison. Their verdict, like Bonilla's, was harsh.

The height of this troop is substandard, as are its state of health, fitness, and physical strength. Although skilled in horsemanship, they lack the first rudiments of military discipline and standard operational procedure, confining themselves to no more than guarding the barracks and caballada. Even though there may be positive reports that some of the enemy have entered the province, this troop does not bestir itself to pursue them. The inhabitants of this country complain of these proceedings with good reason because of the total lack of protection afforded them by the military of the province.

28Sidney B. Brinckerhoff and Odie B. Faulk, Lancers for the King, pp. 42–45. On May 9 Eixarch had baptized eight-day-old María Rita Gregoria of Tubac, daughter of Leonor Dominguez and an unknown father. DCB. The previous month Arriquibar may have accompanied Lieutenant Oliva on campaign. Crespo to Bucareli, Horcasitas, May 21, 1775, AGN, PI, 96.

29Crespo to Bucareli, Horcasitas, June 22, 1775, and [Bucareli] to Crespo, México, Aug. 23, 1775, ibid.
That hardly seemed fair. Perhaps had Captain Anza been present, instead of shaping up his second California expedition at Horcasitas, O’Conor might have tempered his report. The Irishman did laud sixty-year-old acting post commander Juan Maria de Oliva. Eighteen years in rank, many times wounded, veteran of over a hundred campaigns, the lieutenant was “a daring officer of courage and good conduct, but he does not know how to read or write.”

The commandant-inspector reserved his special ire for Anza’s incompetent and sickly twenty-five-year-old godson, Ensign Juan Felipe Belderrain. Appointed by Anza in 1771 with no previous service, Belderrain was the son of the captain who founded Tubac in 1753 and thereby a member of Sonora’s closely knit Basque community. Anza had made him supply officer.

Don Felipe had proven a grafter, buying low and selling high to the troops, a practice expressly forbidden by the Reglamento. Without the captain to cover for him, the whole company complained. An audit of the books convinced O’Conor that Belderrain ought to be cashiered and forbidden ever to wear a military insignia. “In addition to his bad conduct and faint-hearted cowardice he possesses many other vices that justify his complete separation from the royal service.”

On review the Tubac troop was a sight. The full fifty-six-man company including officers consisted of a criollo captain (Anza’s father was born in Spain), a “Spanish” lieutenant and ensign (that is, descended from Spaniards), a sergeant (vacant), two Spanish corporals, sixteen Spanish soldiers, fifteen coyote soldiers (offspring of mestizos and Indians), eight mulatto soldiers, one mestizo soldier, and ten Opata Indian scouts. One trooper, twenty-eight-year-old José Antonio Azedo, a veteran of Anza’s first California expedition, lay ill, completely unfit for service and “without hope of regaining health.” Seven others, five of whom had made the California march, deserved honorable discharges because of fatigue and sickness.

Instead of presenting a smart appearance in the uniform specified by the Reglamento — short blue jacket with red collar, blue trousers and cape, sleeveless leather cuera, cartridge-box, bandoleer with the name of the presidio, black neckerchief, hat, shoes, and leggings — the whole ragtag garrison looked to O’Conor “practically naked.”

Nor did their weapons measure up. The four worthless carriage-mounted cannon noted eight years earlier by the Marqués de Rubí were still there. Except for a few made in Barcelona, O’Conor considered the muskets, manufactured in New Spain in a variety of calibers, all but useless. Of lances and swords there was an assortment. Since he expected an arms shipment for all the presidios of Sonora, the commandant-inspector ordered the troop to make do awhile longer. Meantime they must round up another sixty-nine horses and fourteen mules to bring the presidial herd up to seven per man. Saddles and trappings he classed as serviceable, except for the open wooden stirrups. The Reglamento stated closed wooden stirrups.

Some strategists, including Rubí, expected the civilian settlers clustered around Tubac, like those of much larger El Paso del Norte on the Río Grande,
The Tubac troop, their ranks, names, ages, years of service, conduct, horses, and mules, August 13, 1775.
to form militia units and defend themselves after the garrison was moved away. One look discouraged O'Conor.

The civilian population congregated at this presidio is composed of forty-one families of gente de razón, two of Opata Indians, one of Piros [a tribe of the middle Río Grande in New Mexico], and one of Apaches. Yet all are so wretched that one cannot count on their permanence in this pueblo once the troop is transferred to its new station at Tucson. It is to be expected that they will follow since the members of the troop, their sons, nephews, brothers, and relations, will be so close that they are inclined, according to what they told me, to move to the new presidio.31

31 O’Conor, Extracto de revista, Tubac, Aug. 9–18, 1775, AGI, Guad., 515.
Lance points, the center one inscribed "Presidio de San Ignacio, Tubac."

A leather-jacketed presidial soldier of the late colonial period. Translation of key:
Regarding the state of the troops who garrison the frontier line of the nine Interior Provinces of New Spain.
(N 1) Quilted leather jacket of seven-ply buckskin.
(N 2) Pommel and cantle of saddle.
(N 3) Carbine.
(N 4) Saddlebags for carrying water and provisions.
(N 5) Lance.
(N 6) Pistols hanging from hooks on saddle skirt.
(N 7) Shield.
(N 8) Boots and spurs.
(N 9) Wooden stirrups.
(N 10) Cartridge box.
O'Conor wanted the presidios of Sonora to fall into a neat line on his map. If he moved Tubac north to Tucson and Terrenate to Santa Cruz, they would line up with Fronteras at San Bernardino. The commandant-inspector had written off Arivaca. Not only was it too far south but its only water, he reported, was a ciénaga that all but evaporated during the dry season.\textsuperscript{32} Taking Lieutenant Oliva and twenty of the Tubac garrison with him as an escort, O'Conor forded the river a league north of the presidio and disappeared down the trail to San Xavier. He must see Tucson for himself.

Two days later he walked the ground and was pleased. Once a Pima field camp called San Agustín by the Jesuits, the site lay east of the river across from the occupied visita of Tucson. It was nearly flat, somewhat elevated, and open enough to see anyone approaching. Wood, water, and pasturage could be had nearby. A presidio here, O'Conor boasted, would result in “a perfect closing of the Apache frontier.” Father Garcés, who had ridden out from San Xavier with the official party, agreed, but only because the comandante-inspector insisted.\textsuperscript{33}

O'Conor had no use for friars who meddled in military affairs. He had in fact expressed himself on this point a couple of weeks before, and thereby stuck his boot in his mouth. Earlier in the year Garcés had set out for Mexico City to brief Viceroy Bucareli firsthand on his explorations and the need for new missions. When the itinerant friar fell ill at Ures he asked his compaño Fray Juan Díaz to take down his thoughts on everything from New Mexico-California communications to presidial locations. Garcés had been begging since 1768 for a missionary for Tucson. He wanted the presidio placed another fifty miles north at the confluence of the Gila and the San Pedro. When Bucareli passed the Díaz-Garcés letter on to O'Conor for comment, the comandante-inspector, instead of taking issue with specific points, impulsively attacked Father Díaz.\textsuperscript{34}

I find that this religious disposed it all from the sitting room, without ever having seen or reconnoitered the terrain he treats in his report and map . . . as his own brothers testify. Although not for that should his pretty thoughts be denied all regard. In order to gain expertise in matters of such gravity it would have been normal to have made the appropriate reconnaissance of the terrain before drawing up the report and map. . . . It is certain that in these Provincias Internas expertise is gained from experience not from theory or the books with which some persons try to shine in the matters they treat, matters too often foreign to their profession.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{32}O'Conor to Bucareli, Janos, Aug. 29, 1775, AGN, PI, 88.

\textsuperscript{33}Garcés cosigned the site inspection certification at San Xavier del Bac, Aug. 20, 1775, \textit{ibid.} Dobyns translated it in \textit{Lance, Ho! Containment of the Western Apaches by the Royal Spanish Garrison at Tucson}, p. 5. See also Moore and Beene, “Report of O'Conor,” pp. 270–71.

\textsuperscript{34}Díaz to Bucareli, March 21, 1775. [Bucareli] to O'Conor, México, May 10, 1775, AGN, PI, 88.

\textsuperscript{35}O'Conor to Bucareli, Altar, Aug. 3, 1775, \textit{ibid.}
At San Xavier that day, Father Garces evidently won don Hugo over. They reached an accord. Writing to Bucareli, the friar laid on the blandishments. If only the gallant Irish chief had reached these frontiers years before, surely Sonora would not have fallen so low at the hand of the Apache. As for building a presidio at Tucson, that was fine with Garces, since O’Conor had affirmed that both the Gila and the Colorado would be occupied “at no additional cost to the royal treasury.” The Colorado project now seemed assured. But the friar worried about the Gila. He had submitted all the particulars to Bucareli by various channels, “especially when Anza was raising objections.”

While the commandant-inspector reconnoitered the new sites for Terrenate and Fronteras with half the troop from Tubac, chilling word came from the Gila. Vicente Gaspar, a hispanicized Yuma who had escaped from his Apache captors, told how the hostiles were massing, waiting only for more light from the moon to sweep into the province. Their main objectives, he said, were Tubac and Terrenate, which they intended to destroy completely, and then Cieneguilla.

On September 7 they struck. And this time on the first try they overran the entire Tubac caballada. From Horcasitas the furious Captain Anza had to send horses to mount the men he had summoned as an escort. The Apaches, suddenly and happily encumbered by five hundred head, forgot all about Terrenate and Cieneguilla.

A lookout on the hill above Calabazas Sunday morning, October 15, 1775, would have seen far below in the valley to the right the squat, gray-robed figure of Father Arriquibar and several other horsemen making for the pueblo. Soon he would have heard the bell. The friar had come to say Mass. Now to the left coming north down the road along the river he would have made out another similarly chunky Franciscan and four soldiers. They too turned off the main trail and rode up to Calabazas. This was Fray Pedro Font, “cosmographer” of the second Anza expedition, which he had left only a couple of leagues behind. Because the commander had forbidden Font to say Mass in camp for fear of an Apache raid, the impetuous friar had ridden on ahead toward Tumacacori. He and Arriquibar embraced.

Before midday a dust cloud in the direction Font had come announced the approach of the whole caravan. Out in front mounted scouts scanned for signs of Apaches. Next, leading the vanguard and sitting his saddle like the returning conqueror, rode the bearded Lieutenant Colonel Anza. Then came all manner of men, women, and children, poor people from down the coast recruited to settle the port of San Francisco in California, well over a hundred, all of them outfitted “from shoes to hair ribbons.” Some of the men had two and even three children up with them. Behind the rear guard twenty mule-

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36 Garces to Bucareli, San Xavier del Bac, Aug. 20, 1775, ibid., 237.
37 Anza to Bucareli, Horcasitas, Sept. 23, 1775, ibid. Bernardo de Urrea to Bucareli, Altar, Sept. 11, 13, and Oct. 4, 1775, and Feb. 3, 1776, ibid. Vicente Gaspar was suspected of being in league with rebel Pimas. Expediente formado a consecuencia de consulta del Gobernador don Francisco Crespo, con que acompanó la causa principiada contra el indio Yuma Vicente Gaspar, ibid., 246.
teers, most of them green hands, did their best to keep 140 loaded pack mules on the road. And last, as bunched as the vaqueros could keep them, followed all the spare mules and horses.38

For a colonizing expedition expected to cover a thousand miles to plant a key outpost of empire, the Anza caravan seemed cursed with an inordinate number of broken-down nags. Father Font blamed the commander.

It is not surprising that there should have been so many disasters among the animals, because since the commander did not go to Tubac in August [when O'Connor was there] as he should have done, and as he formerly had planned to do, in his absence there was some disorder there, during which the Apaches fell upon the presidio and carried off all the horse herd, comprising some five hundred animals. With this and with the animals which he lost at San Miguel [de Horeasitas] in a stampede... he was left with too few mounts for so long a journey with such a shortage of pasture. But he did not wish to purchase any more, saying that the ones he had were enough, and that if all could not go on horseback they could go on foot.39

Plucky Pedro Font, sick and out of humor much of the time, would fault the commander all the way to California and back. For his part, Anza resented the barrel-shaped chaplain's ignorance of the frontier.40 Assigned to the expedition because he could take latitudes, Font kept the adventure's most complete and most human diary.

A catalán from Gerona who had crossed the Atlantic on the Júpiter with Garcés but only recently arrived in Sonora, Pedro Font was of medium height but blocky. His face was round and his black hair receding. He was musical and artistic: at the college he had sung in the choir and drawn great illuminated choir books.41 He had left his mission of San José de Pimas in Pimería Baja in the care of Fray Joaquín Belarde. While Anza was held up a week at Tubac, crowded now with a third again as many people, Font stayed at Tumacácori, mostly in bed suffering from a stomach ailment and diarrhea.

Tumacácori in fact looked like a friary. Besides Eixarch, Arriquibar, and Font, Garcés came down from San Xavier and his temporary replacement, ruddy Félix de Gamarra, rode in from Tubutama. The talk over cups of chocolate must have ranged from Spain to California. Companionship of this sort was rare in the missions.

Anza had authorization to buy what provisions he could in the missions of Pimería Alta. Tumacácori cannot have offered much. Most of the 355 head of beef cattle, for example, had been driven up from the south. Chaplain Font did at least borrow a set of cruets from Tumacácori and "a supply of hosts for

38ACE, vol. 1, pp. 227-41. Font's complete diary, Sept. 29, 1775-June 2, 1776, ibid., vol. 4. I have changed a few words in quoting Bolton's translations from vols. 2-5.


40Anza to Bucareli, México, Jan. 7, 1775, AGN, PI, 237.

41Documents concerning the mission of 1763, AGI, Contratación, 5545A. Arricivita, Crónica seráfica, pp. 560-61.
the whole journey." But the mission's major contribution was an individual, a member of the expedition who except for the diary he kept remained almost anonymous in the official correspondence. Father Tomás Eixarch was going.

Garcés had arranged it. If it had been left to him, he himself would not have gone with Anza the second time. He and his warm ally Governor Crespo were much more interested in opening a road up the Colorado River to the Hopi pueblos and to New Mexico. The energetic, Spanish-born Crespo, bidding to upstage local hero Anza, had informed the viceroy of his readiness.42 Garcés from his sickbed in Ures had concurred. Let Anza do no more than convey the colonists to San Francisco.

I think that it should be decided to dispatch another expedition on the express business of inspecting the country and assuring the road, not only to the River of San Francisco, but also to New Mexico, an enterprise which, according to the reports which we possess, it seems to me would be very easy. And from its accomplishment would result many advantages. . . . If you are pleased to so order, I think that it would be very useful to entrust this enterprise to the governor of these provinces, don Francisco Antonio Crespo, whose prudence, energy, and faithfulness assure me that he would successfully accomplish this and more arduous enterprises.

If, as the viceroy had disposed, Garcés' part in the second Anza expedition amounted to no more than sitting alone with the Yumas on the Colorado, he could add nothing to what was already known. Besides, it was the Gila Pimas and Halchidhomas, not the Yumas, who held the more northerly route he favored.43

But like it or not Garcés was committed. Bucareli had made it clear: if the friar did not care to serve God and king on the Colorado, that part of the expedition would be scrapped.44 Oh no, wrote Garcés, "Your Excellency supposed and very rightly that I wanted to have a part in it." He had merely wished to point out that without a companion he could not serve as effectively as he desired. Very well, responded Bucareli, let Father Garcés take a companion. In accordance Anza had outfitted Eixarch with mules, horses, and gear.45 At Tumacácori the two friars must have reached an agreement. Tomás Eixarch would hold the Yumas' hands while Garcés struck for New Mexico.

Anza sent for the friars on Saturday, October 21. During the previous expedition he had taken offense at the meddling of Garces and Díaz in affairs he considered strictly his concern. This time it would be different. This time the friars would confine themselves to the expedition's spiritual welfare and

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44 [Bucareli] to Díaz, México, May 24, 1775, AGN, PI, 88.
leave command to him. When he wanted their opinions he would ask. This time, by order of the viceroy, the friars were subordinate.46

He explained the delay. They were waiting for Sergeant Juan Pablo Grijalva, his wife, and three children to come from Terrenate. Because not enough soldiers were available to give them a strong escort, the family was traveling at night.47 When the Grijalvas rode in safe late that afternoon, the roll was complete. It now stood at an even two hundred and forty persons — 7 officers and friars, 8 veterans from other Sonora presidios, 10 Tubac soldiers making the journey for the second time, 20 recruits, 165 wives and children, and 30 assorted muleteers, vaqueros, interpreters, and servants. They would attend Mass Sunday, and set out Monday morning.

Father Font asked Anza if he might use the quadrant to take the latitude of Tubac. He wanted to practice. Having to ask every time galled the friar. “It is certain that the viceroy ordered the astronomical quadrant delivered to me so that I might observe on the way. But Señor Anza, desirous of making himself the author of the observations, immediately took charge of it and did not wish to deliver it to me.”48

At Mass on Sunday Font preached to the assembled crowd. Taking his theme from the Gospel of the day — “Fear not, little flock!” — the stocky Franciscan exhorted them to persevere on the long trek ahead. They should be happy that God had chosen them for such an enterprise.

And, comparing the journey of the children of Israel through the Red Sea to the Promised Land with the journey of the present expedition across the Colorado River to Monterey, I reminded them of the punishment which God might mete out to them if they mistreated the heathens on the way or scandalized them by their conduct, as He did with the Israelites who committed such excesses, or if they murmured at the commander of the expedition or his orders as did they at their leader Moses, failing to render him due obedience. On the other hand, I assured them of God’s help and that of our patroness, the Most Holy Virgin of Guadalupe.49

The unwieldy column began to move out behind the royal standard at eleven o’clock Monday morning, October 23, 1775. The first night, ten miles north at the place called La Canoa, the wife of Vicente Félix died in childbirth leaving him with seven children. Incredibly, considering the high incidence of illness en route, she was the expedition’s only fatality. Garcés went ahead to San Xavier with the body. When the caravan reached there on Thursday, Father Eixarch baptized the new infant, while Font married three couples who could not wait till they got to California. From San Xavier they marched past Tucson, “the last Christian pueblo in this direction,” and slowly left behind on the

46 Anza to Bucareli, Jan. 7, 1775. [Bucareli] to Anza, México, Jan. 9, 1775, AGN, PI, 237.
47 Anza to Bucareli, Tubac, Oct. 20, 1775, ibid.
48 ACE, vol. 4, p. 523. Anza assured the viceroy that he had already handed over the instrument to Font. Anza to Bucareli, Horcasitas, Sept. 23, 1775, AGN, PI, 237.
49 ACE, vol. 4, pp. 20–21.
horizon the massive, blue Santa Catalinas. A month later they were on the Río Colorado surrounded by hundreds of curious Yumas.50

The river had not yet begun its awesome seasonal rise. At a place scouted by Anza where the great silty flow divided into three shallow channels they crossed to the west bank. Father Font unsteadily astride a tall horse got wet to the knees. “Since I was ill and dizzy headed, three naked servants accompanied me, one in front guiding the horse, and one on each side holding me on so that I would not fall.” The trusting Garcés “was carried over on the shoulders of three Yumas, two at his head and one at his feet, he lying stretched out face up as though he were dead.” No one said how Tomás Eixarch made it across.

The following day, December 1, with the cold northwest wind kicking up a fierce dust storm, Anza ordered some of the muleteers to build a shelter for Fathers Garcés and Eixarch. Font was in a foul mood. Anza had let the vestments get wet. He had not allowed the friars to distribute gifts to the Indians “for he wants all the glory himself.” He still refused to give him the quadrant. Yet he had insisted that Font bring with him his psaltery, a stringed musical instrument, to entertain the Indians, even though so far he had “not even suggested that I play it.”

Now the chaplain wanted to know what provisions the commander was making to leave two friars among the heathens without a guard. “By this he was very much vexed, and asked me why I was quizzing him in that way, saying that he did not have to report to me.” No wonder, wrote Font in his diary, that the Venerable Fray Antonio Margil de Jesús used to pray, “A militibus libera nos Domine,” “Lord, deliver us from soldiers.”

Font and the soldiers and the caravan resumed their march December 4. Besides the two Spanish Franciscans, the little party left behind at Yuma comprised seven persons of varying ability. The three Indians listed as interpreters, who would not lift a hand to help in any other capacity, the missionaries invariably described as very poor Spanish speakers “no matter how many signs they make.” The two “muleteers,” California runaway Sebastián Tarabal and a young servant who chose not to go on with his soldier-colonist employer, fortunately proved more useful. Fray Tomás would thank God more than once for this nameless lad who could cook and do most anything. But no one objected when good-for-nothing Joseph María Araiza of Tubac, who had volunteered to serve Garcés, begged to go back. The seventh person, a small boy evidently from Tumacacori who came along to look after Father Eixarch’s horses, served faithfully the whole time.

The day after Anza left, Garcés took a supply of glass beads and tobacco, two interpreters, and Sebastián and set off downriver eager to comply with the viceroy’s charge, to talk with the peoples on the lower Colorado and to see “if they were disposed and ready for religious instruction and for becom-

ing subjects of our Sovereign." He would then return to base camp at Yuma and be off toward New Mexico.

In the meantime the unsung Father Eixarch settled in. For the second time since their call to Sonora a friar of the Querétaro college had the chance to work for a time among true heathens, to preach the good news in a place where the very name of Christ had hardly been heard. The first, Fray Juan Crisóstomo Gil de Bernabé, had died a martyr. Eixarch ran the same risk.

Dec. 4. ... Today I began to arrange things in the house, for since it was new it lacked nearly everything. In the afternoon the Indians brought me many provisions, and I was very much pleased to see them so affectionate. Captains Palma and Pablo told me that I should not be hungry because they would take excellent care of me, and that I must not be afraid, for although enemies might come they would do me no harm, because they would defend me. These two captains do not leave me alone at all during the entire day, and they are so prompt with everything that I request of them that it is something to marvel at. When I get up in the morning they are already at the fire awaiting me, and at night they do not leave me until I retire. Tonight I began to talk about God to Palma and others who assembled, very glad to listen. This Palma does not go to bed until after the Rosary is said, and although he does not pray, because he does not know how as yet, he does all that he sees us do, such as crossing himself and other ceremonies.

Dec. 5. The Indian women brought a great quantity of beans, maize, calabashes and some wheat, and to show my pleasure and happiness I gave them glass beads and tobacco. ...

Dec. 9. After sunrise I said Mass, but it was so cold that my fingers were numb and I could scarcely finish. Today nothing special happened, except that I talked to Palma for the purpose of sending a courier to Caborca and to the presidio of Altar. ...

Dec. 11. ... The fact is that the messenger went because I have been left without wine and with only a few candles. I say without wine, because that which Commander Anza left us, if it is wine, is for him to say, for I and my servants do not recognize it as such. Not only has it the vilest taste, but even the color looks like water mixed with mud. ...

Dec. 24. ... At night a Yuma came and told me that when Father Garcés arrived the Indians of the Halyikwannais tribe were fighting with the people of the Cócopa tribe, their enemies. They added that the Cócopas had taken away the father's habit and left him naked, because those people do not care to do anything except kill the other tribes, and "what is a padre good for?" they say. ... Other details I omit for the present, for as a rule I do not have much faith in what the Indians say, although since the reports are ominous I am inclined to give them some credit. ...

Dec. 30. ... After praying and singing the praises of the Most Holy Virgin I explained the mystery of the unity of God and some of His attributes, especially His omnipotence, manifested in the creation of such things as the water, the heavens, the firmament, the sun, and other things most conspicuous, for I accommodate myself to the simplicity of these poor ignorants. ...

Jan. 3, 1776. ... In the afternoon one of the two interpreters whom Father Garcés had with him came bringing me a letter from this father, in which he tells me that he will be here tonight. About seven o'clock
Father Garcés arrived, and I was greatly delighted, for I was anxious to see him. After supper we talked a good while, and he recounted to me many notable things, which I will note down when the father gives me the diaries he has kept. . . .

Jan. 10. . . . Today I went with two interpreters to see a very rare thing. It happened that they had told me that it was the custom of these Indians when a woman comes to her first menstruation to bury her in the sand, having warmed it previously with fire. Then many women sing and dance about her for a space of two or three hours, performing this ceremony four consecutive days at a designated hour. . . .

Jan. 19. In the morning it was cloudy. After Mass they brought the wounded horse and an Indian began to blow on the wound, performing various ceremonies, such as taking many handfuls of earth and rubbing it on the swelling of the belly. Father Garcés, as soon as he learned of these ceremonies, ordered an interpreter to bring the horse so that he might give him water, because he did not wish the Indians to continue doctoring him. But the fact is that . . . the swelling went down. . . .

Jan. 23. Day dawned very foggy, as yesterday. After Mass the other interpreter came and said that his sister was very ill. Father Garcés told him to catch two horses and next day they would go to see her and baptize her. Afterward, about nine o'clock in the morning, many Indians came to play their game. In the afternoon it rained some. There being so many Indians here they came into the house and annoyed me greatly, for they are very boorish. But it is necessary to put up with it all and bear with it, although every day and at all times they are very troublesome. The worst of it is that during these concourses it is impossible to say anything because they make such a hubbub, beside the fact that these Yumas are very filthy and have no shame whatever. Most of them go about just as they were born, without the slightest covering, and others, although they may have a cotton blanket or a Hopi blanket, do not cover themselves except from the middle of the body up. In a word, they are the most immodest people I have ever seen, and the reason is that they do not appreciate . . . what is so natural in mankind as modesty. . . .

Jan. 26. . . . We have noticed that some old Indians entertain the foolish notion that those who are baptized immediately die, but Father Garcés and I are disabusing them of their error. . . .

Feb. 8. . . . I thought that by moving from the other house to this one I should not be so much molested by the Indians, but just the contrary has happened; for if formerly they used to come for a short spell now it is for the whole day. I said molested not because they anger me, for I love them greatly, but because it is necessary to have a great quantity of tobacco and other things to give them, whereas I have very little. . . . They put the tobacco in a reed as thick as the finger, to fill which a good handful is necessary; and so they smoke, for they are not satisfied with a cigarette. . . .

Feb. 14. . . . After dinner Father Garcés set out in the company of the Indian Sebastián and two interpreters. He intends to go visit the Jamajab,

Yavapai, the Havasupai, Chemehuevi and other tribes who dwell upstream and in the mountains. . . .

Feb. 20. This morning the weather was fair. I did not say Mass because I had spent a horrible night on account of the troublesome flux from which I suffered. Nothing else happened.52

While Eixarch kept his uncomfortable vigil on the Colorado and Garcés explored, the western Pimas, the "Piatos" — short for Pimas Altos — as they came to be called, once again threatened revolt. Notoriously inconstant, these people of the Caborca area and their relatives up the Altar Valley had run amuck in the bloody uprisings of 1695 and 1751. Some of them had joined the Seris at Cerro Prieto in the 1760s. Incidents in the missions were frequent. When Governor Ignacio Yuburigipsi of Pitiquito mocked Fray Juan Díaz late in 1772, Captain Urrea had stationed at the mission six soldiers from the presidio of Altar.53

Rumors of an uprising persisted. Bonilla had heard them when he inspected Altar in 1774. Now in January, 1776, Urrea received an ominous letter from Fray Antonio Ramos, missionary at Sáric. His Indians were plotting with a vengeance. Word of it had reached at least as far as Tumacácori.

Since the previous August 8, the day he arrived at Sáric, Father Ramos had been gathering evidence of a cabal among his wards. They had assembled unlawfully some distance from the pueblo, and then begun making bows and arrows in earnest. The night of December 10, the son of the mission mayordomo had seen a circle of Indians: in their midst lay war clubs, macanas. The next night the macanas were gone.

Later the mayordomo's son accompanied Father Félix de Gamarra as far as Tumacácori. There, he claimed, Miguel Antonio, governor of Tumacácori, had said to him, "Friend, I don't know how you dare live at Sáric, because the people of Sáric have lost their heads — they mean to revolt."

Already they had begun dancing in a circle with macanas and masks, "dancing whole days and part of the night." When Father Ramos left Sáric on December 28 to visit Fray Manuel Carrasco at Magdalena, the Indians danced for 24 hours and held nocturnal meetings. Ensign Felipe Belderrain halted at Sáric, January 3, 1776. While watching a dance he noticed a concealed macana fall to the ground. Two days later Ramos returned. Reading the signs, he decided to call the Indians' bluff.

After the Mass of Epiphany on January 6, he suddenly let them know that he was on to their plot. His words struck them in the face. When he called in his interpreter and the justicias and got down to cases, Miguel, governor of the visita of Aquituni, confessed. It was true, they planned to rebel. Who had incited them? Manuel, ex-governor of Tubutama. Later that morning


Vicente, past governor of Sáric, told who the main conspirators in the pueblo were: Ignacio the carpenter, Agustín the oxherd, and one Francisco who lived next to the Padre's house. The missionary urged the justicias to inform on the others — it would be a shame if the innocent had to pay.

Ramos was playing a dangerous game. When he wrote to Urrea that afternoon he pleaded that the captain not implicate him in any way. If the Indians thought he had betrayed them, a few soldiers could not save him.

I am convinced that the thing is very advanced and already much inflamed. I am also convinced that almost all the Indians of this pueblo are involved or are accomplices in the crime, although I do not doubt that some, like those Vicente named, have thrown more fuel on the fire than others.54

Captain Urrea, who remembered the charred ruins and mutilated bodies from the 1751 uprising, did not discount the friar's report. He wrote straightforward to Governor Crespo, evidently suggesting immediate action. Crespo came in person. In a show of force meant to intimidate the Indians, the Spanish governor of Sonora ordered troops into the pueblos to round up the accused. Years later he described tersely what happened. "With the apprehension of the governor of said Pimería and a few others of the most influential Indians, the country was left in peace."55

Out on the Colorado, Father Eixarch noted that the river had begun to rise. He was glad to be on higher ground. "I would rather take the trouble of building the house in a safe place, since Commander Anza did not do so, than find myself in sudden peril." He continued to preach peace and monogamy to the Yumas, a tribe that glorified warfare and let a man take as many women as he could handle. They brought him fish and watermelons, begged for tobacco, and learned to cross themselves and to mouth the words "Ave Maria." He might have been more effective had the no-account interpreters known more Spanish. Yet he said he was content.

From the doorway of his house of poles and willow branches he could stand with the morning sun on his face and look down at the Colorado both to the right and to the left of the narrows at Yuma, named by Spanish the Puerto de la Concepción. Who back in Spain had even heard of Yuma? But here he was, Tomás Eixarch, one lone friar of God amidst a throng of naked heathens. Though he must guard against pride, who had been more blessed than he with an opportunity to live Christ's dictum "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me"? Still, he never lost sight of the practical.

Feb. 29. At sunrise I said Mass. Now the heat is so great in the daytime that one can not remain in the sun. I may also note that this country is very much plagued with rats, and with bats and other vermin. The first, especially, do me a great deal of damage, and since the house is

54 Ramos to Urrea, Sáric, Jan. 6, 1776, *ibid.*, 246.
55 Crespo to Mayorga, March 29, 1780.
situated on the hill they have it all undermined, stealing and eating everything that is in it. For this reason the ministers who come to found these missions, which I hope will be established soon, must try to bring some cats. . . .

March 4. In the morning the weather was fair. I did not say Mass. Early in the morning Pablo and some old men made a raft of poles like a crate, and after dinner, sitting on top, I was taken across the river by six Indians swimming and steering the raft. It must have been about noon when in company with Pablo I took the road for my journey.

He was away six weeks, crossing and recrossing the fearsome desert Camino del Diablo, to the missions of Caborca and the Altar Valley. There he confessed, spent Holy Week, and heard the latest news from men of reason. Father Manuel Carrasco had died. After inspecting the Sonora presidios, Comandante-Inspector O'Conor had launched a massive general campaign, a great pinchers movement with troops from Sonora, led by Governor Crespo himself, and from New Mexico, Nueva Vizcaya, and Coahuila, all converging on the Apaches of the upper Gila. The offensive had lasted until December. The bodycount, as released by the military, was impressive: 138 Apaches killed, 104 captured, nearly two thousand head of stock recovered.56

When he got back to the Colorado the raft was waiting. "As soon as I entered the house it filled up with men, women, and children, who manifested the great joy they felt at my return." He gave them tobacco, and for nearly four weeks more he was their Padre. On May 11, he concluded his diary abruptly: "In the morning the weather was fair and I said Mass. Before noon Father Fray Pedro Font returned with Captain Anza and the soldiers who went from Tubac on the expedition."57

It was over. He did not really want to leave. Orders were orders, Anza reminded him. But no one had heard from Father Garcés. A rumor had him among the Halchidhomas not far off. Reluctantly, the commander agreed to send an Indian upriver with a letter. If the friar did not present himself in three days the column would leave without him. When Garcés failed to show, Font surmised that either he had found a road to New Mexico "as he desired, or, on the other hand, had encountered some great mishap in his apostolic wanderings, since he was now traveling somewhat ill, if indeed he had not died or Indians had not killed him."58

The indomitable Garcés was in fact at the time enjoying himself, making his way through pine and oak and spring wildflowers in the Tehachapi Mountains of California, three hundred miles northwest. He had detoured from the Colorado west to mission San Gabriel, much to the consternation of California Governor Fernando Xavier de Rivera y Moncada; explored north into the San Joaquin Valley; and was now headed for the Mohave Desert.

In the weeks ahead, the roving missionary would recross the Colorado

57 Eixarch's diary.
58 Font's complete diary, ACE, vol. 4, p. 485.
above today's Needles, descend into Havasu Canyon, and end up an unwanted
guest of the Hopis at Oraibi on the fourth of July, 1776. Instead of pushing
on to Zuñi he would double back, to the great disappointment of the New
Mexico friars, and return via the Colorado and Gila to his mission of San
Xavier. Though Father Eixarch would share little of the recognition and
none of the glory, by his patient ministry to the Yumas the missionary of
Tumacácori had made possible one of the epic journeys of North American
exploration.

At Caborca, Eixarch heard news that made him pale. The swaggering
don Felipe Belderrain, still ensign of the Tubac garrison thanks to Anza's
influence, rode in May 24 to report that nothing remained of Tumacácori.
The Apaches had carried off everything. The cavalier way he described the
tragedy appalled Father Font.

Next morning Belderrain entered a room where the chaplain and others
were talking. Without greeting Font, the cocky officer began relating the details
"with great coolness, and as if boasting." All the Apaches had left to do was
carry off the women. That did it. Font could contain himself no longer.

I told him I was ashamed to see him laugh, and by the way he related
such misfortunes. He tried to defend himself by saying,

"Well, Father, must I cry?"

I replied, "Yes, Sir, you ought to cry, for I, although I am not of
this country, greatly regret its unhappiness; while you, whose duty it is
to try and remedy the situation by restraining the enemy, do not, since
you people attend to nothing but gambling, dancing the fandango, and
wearing many galloons on your hats" (he wore two galloons on his hat).

He replied with great impudence that I ought to go there and com­
mand the soldiers, and then they would see my ability and learn how
it is done. When he repeated this twice, I replied that it was not my busi­
ness to command the soldiers. I concluded by telling him that I did not
wish to argue with him any more because he was a man without man­
ers. Then I went to say Mass.

During lunch the anxious Eixarch asked Anza for some saddle horses
so he could return immediately to Tumacácori. "To get rid of him," said Font,
the commander consented. Fray Tomás then suggested that the lad who had
stayed on the Colorado and served him so well deserved payment. Anza
declined, and that set Font off again.

Later in the afternoon Eixarch departed in the unpleasant company of
Ensign Belderrain. Though he probably knew by then that the officer had
exaggerated the attack just to bait Font, he wanted to get back to his mission.
When he did, he found it and Father Arriquibar much as he had left them
seven months before. The story that Tumacácori had been utterly destroyed
in 1776 — picked up as fact by historians using Font's diary — was Belder­
rain's idea of a practical joke.60

59Coues, On the Trail, and Galvin, Record of Travels.

60Font's complete diary, ACE, vol. 4, pp. 510-15. Contemporary correspondence, including
a late-1776 rundown by Font himself of pueblos destroyed by Apaches, fails to substantiate
the story. Font to Ximénez, Imuris, Nov. 30, 1776, CC, 201.79.
Back at Tumacácori after a seven-month absence, Fray Tomás Eixarch stayed hardly long enough to tell Father Arriquibar all his stories of the Yumas. By late summer, 1776, he was living at the impoverished visita of San Antonio de Oquitoa and commuting as interim chaplain to the Altar garrison downriver. There he served out the remainder of his required ten years, counting his earlier stint in Texas, and in 1781 retired to the college. He did not ask to return to Spain.

At a meeting in Guadalajara on January 13, 1783, the provincial and definitory of the Franciscan province of Jalisco approved the petition of Tomás Eixarch to join their province. During the mid-1780s he lived a less strenuous religious life at the convento of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción in Acaponeta on the coastal highway about half way between Tepic and Mazatlán. In 1790 his superiors named Fray Tomás, then forty-six, guardian of the friary at Amacueca, south of Guadalajara. How long he lived after that, sólo Dios sabe. 61

A week after Francisco Garcés returned from his incredible two thousand-mile odyssey, he sat down at Tumacácori, weary but grateful, and scrawled a letter to Fray Diego Ximénez Pérez, guardian of the college. He still feared that Anza would urge missions on the Colorado but play down the Gila. Garcés of course pled for “the spiritual welfare of both rivers and of the Pápagoas as well.” Don Hugo O’Conor had assured him of two presidios, one for the Colorado and one for the Gila. The friar wanted to talk again with the comandante-inspector face to face: “One cannot put everything in writing.” He would gladly go to Mexico City if that would help. But changes were afoot, changes that not even the trail-wise Franciscan could foresee. 62

As Spain squared off for a New World showdown with Great Britain, her northern frontier, from the Californias to the Mississippi, appeared frightfully vulnerable. Apache and Comanche barbarians made a mockery of what imperial defenses there were. As visitor general, José de Gálvez had already suggested the solution—a unified northern command, something less than a separate viceroyalty but more than a defensive alliance of provinces. For Sonora and the northwest, the grand design included an intendancy and a bishopric. In 1776, as minister of the Indies, Gálvez followed through.

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