Chapter 6
The Promise and Default of the Provincias Internas
1776-81

If the Yumas continue constant in their docile reduction, it will not be many years before the banks of the Colorado River will be covered with grain fields, fruits, and herds, and settled with faithful vassals of the king.

Commandant General Teodoro de Croix,
General Report, 1781

As to what happened on the Colorado River, both with regard to the new experiment in mission management and with regard to the frightful disaster that followed, what can I say? All we can do is offer our sympathy ... and bow before the inscrutable will of God.

Fray Junípero Serra to Fray Fermín Francisco de Lasuén,
San Carlos, December 8, 1781
In July, 1776, while the Second Continental Congress sweltered in Philadelphia three thousand miles northeast of San Miguel de Horcasitas, Governor Crespo received official word that former Visitor General José de Galvez had been named minister of the Indies at the court in Spain.¹

If the governor offered a toast, he did so stiffly. Although he cannot have known then how profoundly the promotion of Galvez would affect him and the province, to say nothing of Bucareli and the entire viceroyalty, Crespo must have been apprehensive. What would the archreformer do first? The answer came almost before the governor set down his glass.

The Comandancia General de las Provincias Internas del Norte de Nueva España, almost but not quite a separate viceroyalty, was no new idea. It had been discussed since at least mid-century. Gálvez urged it in 1768, a northern jurisdiction independent of the viceroy of México devoted to pacifying, expanding, and strengthening New Spain’s most exposed frontier. By the mid-1770s the impending clash with Great Britain dictated that Spain put her entire colonial house in order.

The six northern governors, from Texas to California, as well as the comandante-inspector, all would answer to the commandant general. He in turn would communicate directly with the king through Gálvez. Like a viceroy, he would be general superintendent of the treasury and vice patron of the church in the Provincias Internas. Though the main object of the new entity was understood to be defense, the royal instructions as usual suggested a higher goal: “the conversion of the numerous heathen Indian tribes of northern North America.”

The choice of Arizpe on the Río Sonora, only a hundred miles or so south and east of Tumacacori, as capital of the new general command reflected Galvez’ preoccupation with the northwest. Through a hand-picked commandant general the new minister intended to consummate his earlier reforms in Sonora, “all my resolutions and arrangements made in 1768 and 1769.”² Instead, he nearly saw the province lost.

The Fleming Teodoro de Croix, caballero of the Teutonic Knights, had worked for Gálvez before. Together with his uncle, the Viceroy Marqués de Croix, he and the visitor had managed the Jesuit expulsion with Machiavellian effectiveness. As first commandant general of the Provincias Internas, he would set the precedents. He would do the bidding of José de Gálvez.

That fall as don Teodoro de Croix recrossed the Atlantic aboard the man-of-war Nuestra Señora del Rosario, Viceroy Bucareli, who wanted more than anything to go home to Spain, scowled. Rightly or not, removal of so large an area from his command would be interpreted by some as a vote of no confidence. Moreover, Gálvez had failed to define precisely the respective authority of viceroy and commandant general. The former, for example, was to provide supplies and aid as requested by the latter. But to what extent? Did Croix have carte blanche in Mexico City? The commandant general must keep the viceroy

¹Crespo to Bucareli, Horcasitas, July 18, 1776, AGN, PI, 96.
CONCURRENT EVENTS

December, 1776  Washington crosses the Delaware. Congress flees Philadelphia. Don Hugo O’Conor concludes his second general campaign against the Western Apaches.

October, 1777  General Burgoyne and 5,700 British troops surrender at Saratoga.

December  Texas, Coahuila, Nuevo Santander, and Nuevo León are created a new northern diocese. American envoys in Paris are informed that France has decided to recognize the independence of the United States.


June  Spain enters the war against England as an ally of France.

September  Gov. Juan Bautista de Anza of New Mexico defeats Comanches under Cuerno Verde in present-day southeastern Colorado. Spaniards seize British posts on the Mississippi.

April, 1781  Gov. Bernardo de Gálvez of Spanish Louisiana takes Pensacola, capturing British General Campbell.

September  The allied siege of Yorktown begins. Los Angeles, second civil settlement in Alta California, founded.
“informed.” Did that imply a check on his independence? Such questions presaged a fight.\(^3\)

Though Croix would not see his inglorious mud capital until late in 1779, the long arm of Gálvez reached out to Sonora well in advance. In July, 1776, the minister of the Indies had appointed as intendant-governor of Sonora another loyal servant and relative of the deceased Marqués de Croix. Pedro Corbalán had been serving as intendant of Sonora, a Gálvez innovation. For a time in the early 1770s he had been interim governor as well. Now with the accession of Gálvez, Corbalán would again exercise dual authority over the political and economic affairs of the province. Military affairs, at least initially, would be put in the hands of Colonel Anza.

Governor Crespo, Bucareli’s appointee, asked to be relieved, claiming ill health. Comandante-Inspector Hugo O’Conor also pled illness. He had given

\(^3\)For the establishment of the Comandancia General, see Navarro García, Gálvez, pp. 275–81. Alfred Barnaby Thomas, Teodoro de Croix and the Northern Frontier of New Spain, 1776–1783, pp. 16–68, takes the part of Croix while Bernard E. Bobb, The Viceroyalty of Antonio María Bucareli in New Spain, 1771–1779, pp. 128–55, sees the conflict from the vantage point of his man.
his all, spent months in the saddle, and finally begged for a less strenuous post. After a second general campaign, lasting from September to December, 1776, the ailing Irishman left the north for his new assignment in the bush as governor of Yucatán.4

Even in 1776, a pivotal year for the northern frontier, the daily round at Tumacacori, the sowing and reaping, the burial of a Pápago baby, catechism, a feast day, the reports of Apache tracks on the mesa, these things changed little. But when affairs of the larger world did intrude to touch the lives of the friars, Indians, and settlers in the valley, one thing they could be certain of—once again it was the iron José de Gálvez calling the tune. And once again the reformers danced.

On January 21, 1777, the Caballero de Croix entered Mexico City. Four weeks later he sent formal notice of his appointment as commandant general to the Father Guardian of the Querétaro college. He expressed his desire to bring peace and progress to the Provincias Internas, and he exhorted the friars to contribute through love and care of the Indians.5 The missions of Sonora were now under Croix’s jurisdiction.

The friars viewed the Provincias Internas with guarded optimism. The promise of an end to the Apache scourge and the vision of missions on the Gila and the Colorado appealed. But what else Galvez and Croix had in mind they could only guess.

Several months before Croix reached Mexico City the college of Querétaro successfully negotiated the transfer of the eight despised Pimería Baja missions. When the bishop of Durango refused to take them, the Franciscan province of Jalisco did. At each the Queretaran in charge signed over to his blue-robed replacement a census of the populace and an inventory of the mission’s material resources, including what improvements he and his brethren had made.6

The relieved grayrobes departed for Pimería Alta, where they arrived in October. They would be ready when word came to occupy the Gila and the Colorado. In the meantime they had to be farmed out among the eight missions. No wonder, commented Father Pedro Font, that they were not received with universal rejoicing by their brother missionaries, “either because they doubt that they can support themselves even without such a burden or for other very good reasons.”7

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4Navarro García, Gálvez, pp. 264, 280, 241–43. O’Conor died in Mérida de Yucatán, March 8, 1779.
5Croix to Guardian, México, Feb. 19, 1777, ACQ, M.
6The missions turned over were: Tecoripa (Aug. 16); Ónavas (Sept. 3); Cumuripa (Sept. 9); San José de Pimas (Sept. 10); Ures (Sept. 26); Opodepe (Oct. 6); Cucurpe (Oct. 10); Pitic de Seris (n.d.). Fernando Mesía and Francisco de Salas Carrillo, México, July 3, 1780, AGN, PI, 258. [Bucareli] to Crespo, México, May 25, 1775, and Crespo, Índice de los asuntos, Horcasitas, Oct. 24, 1776, ibid., 96. Arricivita, Crónica seráfica, pp. 460–61.
7Font to Ximénez, Imuris, Nov. 30, 1776, CC, 291.79. Font opposed the surrender of the Pimería Baja missions. For the college to leave those missions in such a sad state and push on to the Gila and Colorado he thought was sheer folly.
A long, tall Basque with black hair and grayish eyes, ojos gatos as the Spaniards said, took refuge at Tumacácori. At least he and Pedro Arriquibar were paisanos. Only twenty-nine, Fray Juan Bautista de Velderrain was from Cizurquil just off the heavily traveled highway leading down from the north­coast port of San Sebastián. In the port city he had taken his first vows in 1763, and not six years after at the convento grande in Vitoria volunteered, though still a subdeacon, for the mission of 1769 to the college of Querétaro. By 1773 he was missionary to the problem Pimas Bajos of Tecoripa and Suaqui, where three years had made him a veteran.

He had faced down drunken Indians, and more than once talked them out of deserting, but more than that he had built a church. Before Father Vel­derrain's time, the Pimas Bajos known as Sibubapas had revolted and joined the Seris in the Cerro Prieto. When these rebels surrendered, the Spaniards con­sented to build them a new church at royal expense to replace the ruin at Sua­qui. This Velderrain had accomplished in the face of a thousand adversities.

By early 1777 the lanky fríar would move north to San Xavier del Bac and apply himself to learning Piman under Father Garcés. Not long after Garcés departed, Velderrain would begin construction at Bac of the soaring White Dove of the Desert. Well before its completion however, Fray Juan Bautista would die suddenly May 2, 1790, vomiting blood. At Tumacácori, Velderrain, the builder friar, stayed only a couple of months.

A seventy-percent drop in baptisms at Tumacácori, from twenty in 1775 to six in 1776, told the tale. The soldiers had left Tubac. When the viceroy approved, don Hugo O’Conor had written the order, evidently in December, 1775. He expected, wrongly, that construction at Tucson would proceed apace with Indian laborers earning three reales per day.

Anza, after his second triumph, was sitting for a portrait in Mexico City. Since his replacement, the harsh Spaniard don Pedro de Allande y Saavedra, did not assume command until June, 1777, the task of moving the garrison fell on scarred old Lieutenant Juan María de Oliva, a poor administrator at best. It went badly.

Five days after he first dismounted at what was supposed to be the new royal presidio of San Agustín de Tucson, Captain Allande reported to Coman­dante General Croix what a mess he had found. He reviewed the troops and was disgusted at their utter lack of “even the necessities of life.” Two of

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the four outer walls were barely three and a half feet high, the others only footings. Worse, he found no funds to continue building. The Indian laborers had not been paid. Many, he pointed out, were Papagos whose good will was essential to keep open the road to the Gila and Colorado. No funds, no archive, no inventory of what belonged to the presidio, no way to identify the guilty parties — Allande fumed. He implored Croix to send an inspector from headquarters. And just for good measure he locked up Brevet Captain Oliva who only shrugged.12

Not everyone had abandoned Tubac. Some of the settlers remained and organized a militia unit. Old Juan Crisóstomo Ramírez, father of Tumacácori Interpreter Juan Joseph Ramírez, served as captain and presided over such musters as his poor company managed. Allande gave them powder. Most Tubaqueños thought, with some justification, that the army would come to its senses, see Tucson for the bad scene it was, and move the garrison back.

While Father Velderrain did what he could to earn his keep at Tumacácori, a half dozen of his deposed Pimería Baja brothers huddled at Imuris, a small

visita of San Ignacio, and begged for military protection. Only by the barest escape was the glib Father Font among them. Fray Francisco Sánchez Zúñiga of San Ignacio had been extremely kind “even in the middle of his troubles with construction of his fallen church.” He had let Fray Baltasar Carrillo stay there with him and given five of the others lodging at Imuris. To Pedro Font he had entrusted his second visita, Santa María Magdalena.

About eight o’clock Saturday morning, November 16, 1776, the stocky Font was walking across the plaza from the church after Mass. In an instant this tranquil scene changed. The air was suddenly full of whooping and screaming. The pueblo was under attack.

As the hostiles, “Piatos cimarrones, Seris, and some Apaches,” seemingly about forty strong, drove away the stock and began firing the dwellings, the women and children ran for Font’s quarters. The attackers set fire to the roof and went on to ravage the church. Frenzied, they ripped paintings from the walls, poured out the holy oils, grabbed for vestments and chalice, smashed the baptismal font, tore up the missal, and dragged the richly dressed reclining statue of San Francisco Xavier out onto the floor.

In a final rush they broke open the door behind which Font and the women and children were jammed. The three defenders inside shot their last arrows. The only question now was whether to die inside in the flames or outside on the lances of the enemy.

At that moment a party from San Ignacio galloped into the plaza and the raiders scattered. After a seige of two hours Font and the others emerged grimy and choking. “My agony was great,” the friar remembered two weeks later,

to find myself in the middle of the patio of the house, seeing on the one side the pueblo and dwellings burning, on the other the Indian women crying, and at my feet a poor pregnant woman whom the enemy had caught and lanced repeatedly on the ground . . . and a little child of hers with its intestines spilled out just expiring.13

Word of the attack, but not of the rescue, reached Imuris that morning. Fray Matías Gallo dashed off a note to Fray Francisco Roche at Cocospera. He had it before noon. Roche, who eight years before, almost to the day, had lived through the sack of Soamca, wrote an urgent note to Captain Francisco Ignacio Trespalacios at Terrenate and sent it by some Cocospera Indians. The captain knew by ten that night. He rode with thirty men at 1:00 A.M.

By six or seven Sunday morning the column clattered into Cocospera. Roche had heard nothing more. By the time the soldiers reined up at Imuris, the friars had the full story. The enemy reportedly had fled west, the direction from which they had come.

Rather than pursue them on spent horses, Trespalacios decided to return to his presidio by a different route. The friars wondered if that were truly the

13 Font to Ximénez, Nov. 30, 1776. Barbastro, Compendio. Father Barbastro, also one of the group from Pimería Baja, had gone on to Tubutama. Arricivita, Crónica seráfica, pp. 486–88, 551.
reason. The captain’s predecessor, Francisco Tovar, and his entire detachment of twenty-five men had been massacred while pursuing hostiles in the west not six months before. When the Franciscans asked for protection the captain replied that he could not station even two men at Ímuris — that would require orders from higher up.\textsuperscript{14}

The Indians were still digging around in the ashes of Magdalena when the same mixed band of Píato, Seri, and Apache marauders brutally assaulted Saric a week later. Father President Ramos buried ten victims there. Widely dispersed raids followed.

Tumacácori’s turn came three days before Christmas. The hostiles rode in hell-bent, stole all the stock, and “saw itself in great danger of being wiped out.”\textsuperscript{15} Even more devastating was the onslaught at Calabazas on June 10, 1777 — the day Captain Allande reached Tucson. Commandant General Croix, from the city of Querétaro, relayed an account of it to José de Gálvez:

They sacked and set fire to it [Calabazas], burning all the houses, the church, and the granary with more than a hundred fanegas of maize. The mission Indians put up a stiff defense killing thirteen of the enemy at a cost of seven of ours gravely wounded with little hope of survival.

Three days later they struck again, to the west, scattering a party from Altar who were rounding up strays at the rancho of Ocuca. Eight settlers died there.\textsuperscript{16}

With the death toll mounting daily, with fresh Seri and Píato revolts threatening to set off a general native uprising, with even the loyal Opatas charging missionary brutality and non-payment for service as auxiliaries, the plight of Sonora set Croix raging. If indeed, as letter after letter proclaimed, the province was about to fall, then Viceroy Bucareli’s progress reports and the alleged results achieved by O’Conor were gross distortions. How could O’Conor have been so stupid as to order the Sonora presidios moved out beyond the defensible frontier?

The Caballero, taking his own sweet time getting to the frontier, all but demanded of Bucareli two thousand men to reinforce the Provincias Internas, an absurd request in view of the economy imposed on the viceroy. More wisely, Croix named Juan Bautista de Anza comandante de armas for Sonora, in effect military governor, and told him to save the province.\textsuperscript{17}

Again the toast of México, Anza this time had brought stately Chief Palma

\textsuperscript{14}Moreno to Roche, Ímuris, Nov. 16, 1776; Roche to Trespalacios, Cocóspera, Nov. 16, 1776; Trespalacios to Crespo, Ímuris, Nov. 17, 1776; Crespo to Bucareli, Horcasitas, Nov. 22, 1776, AGN, PI, 96. Font to Ximénez, Ures, July 18, 1776, CC, 201.78. Navarro García, \textit{Gálvez}, p. 242. Ximénez to Bucareli, CSCQ, Feb. 7, 1777, AGN, PI, 237. Bucareli to Ximénez, México, Feb. 12, 1777, ACQ, M.

\textsuperscript{15}Font to Ximénez, Tubutama, Jan. 20, 1777, CC, 201.80. Font to Ximénez, Nov. 30, 1776.

\textsuperscript{16}Croix to Gálvez, Querétaro, Aug. 23, 1777, AGI, Guad., 515. The Tumacácori burial entries for most of 1777 are missing.

\textsuperscript{17}For Anza’s tenure as comandante de armas, see Thomas, “Juan Bautista de Anza in Sonora 1777–1778,” in A. Curtis Wilgus, ed., \textit{Hispanic Essays}, pp. 115–34.
of the Yumas to court. He had presented him to capital society at a dazzling reception in the viceregal palace. And he had stood as godfather as the Indian received baptism in the cathedral of México. The viceroy had requested for Anza a full colonelcy: at the same time in Spain the Sonora criollo was being considered for the governorship of New Mexico.

On his triumphal march north Anza presented Palma for confirmation in the cathedral at Durango. Near Culiacán he met and conferred with dejected ex-governor Crespo. The province was in shambles. Undaunted, Comandante Anza took charge at Horcasitas in May, 1777. Even though he would soon learn of his confirmation as governor of New Mexico, his new superior, the Caballero de Croix, would keep him in Sonora for nearly a year.\footnote{Anza to Bucareli, Durango, April 3, 1777, and Horcasitas, May 22, 1777, AGN, PI, 237. Thomas, "Anza in Sonora."}

In June, Anza reviewed the plight of his old command. Since its transfer to Tucson, he reported to Croix, it and the other two garrisons moved north — Terrenate and Fronteras — had all but lost contact with the province they were meant to protect. A third of their troops were constantly engaged in freighting provisions. Add to that another quarter, or perhaps third, escorting the payroll and replacements for the horses and mules incessantly run off by the enemy, and it was no wonder the isolated and undermanned posts served for naught. No wonder the hostiles had it all their own way.

Construction lagged, particularly at Tucson where the building fund had been woefully mismanaged. As for moving that garrison beyond to the confluence of the Gila and San Pedro — Garcés' old idea — that would be heaping folly on folly. Advancing the presidios had been a grave mistake. "In sum, because of the miserable state to which the said cruel barbarians have reduced them, [the inhabitants of Sonora] cannot proclaim themselves possessors of the richest and most fertile province, which the beneficent and supreme Deity destined for them, much less vassals of the best King on earth."\footnote{Anza to Croix, Horcasitas, June 30, 1777, AGI, Guad., 515. Anza had changed his tune. While in Mexico City he had agreed with O'Conor's positioning of the Sonora garrisons. ACE, vol. 5, p. 383.}

Croix tossed the problem back to Anza. He might do as he saw fit about the presidios, even to transferring the garrison of Tucson back to Tubac "since very little will be lost in abandoning the construction of Tucson, which lacking funds is little more than foundations, and since by this measure the restoration of the pueblo of Calabazas and the preservation of those of Tumacácori and others nearby may be assured."\footnote{Croix to Anza, Querétaro, Aug. 15, 1777, and Croix to Gálvez, Querétaro, Aug. 23, 1777, AGI, Guad., 515.}

That was precisely what the people of Tumacácori and Tubac had in mind. In November, 1777, Captain Allande y Saavedra invited them to a hearing. Led by don Manuel Barragán, a three-man citizens' committee appeared in Tucson before the captain to plead their cause. "We trust in God that by the numerous petitions of the poor people this presidio will be restored to its old site." There were good reasons, they alleged, why it should be.

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19Anza to Croix, Horcasitas, June 30, 1777, AGI, Guad., 515. Anza had changed his tune. While in Mexico City he had agreed with O'Conor's positioning of the Sonora garrisons. ACE, vol. 5, p. 383.
In the valley about Tubac there was plenty of fertile cropland. With a third of it lying fallow the community raised annually six hundred or more fanegas of wheat and maize. If the system of irrigation determined by former Captain Anza and continued under Allande remained in force there would be water for all, one week for the Indians of Tumacácori, the next for the settlers of Tubac. Grazing land abounded. Wood too was plentiful, cottonwood and willow along the river and excellent pine in the Sierra de Santa Rita.

Three mines to the west near Arivaca yielding high-grade silver ore could be reached easily from Tubac. Beyond lay fine gold placers. From three recent prospecting forays, the Tubaqueños had in fact brought back two hundred pesos in gold, which they promptly spent with two traders who still had it. Five silver mines in the Sierra de Santa Rita to the east had been worked but with small yield, two with fire and three with quicksilver. But there as elsewhere the Apaches held sway, and few miners cared to risk their scalps.

As the captain knew only too well, he had been obliged to threaten the people of Tubac with heavy penalties to keep them from fleeing. Beset by almost constant raiding and violence, defenseless since the garrison had left, they wanted to break up their homes and get out while they could.

Only the month before, Apaches had run off the last of their cattle and horses, laid waste their fields, and carried away as much maize as they could. And what about the burning of Calabazas? That had never happened before. All that remained at Tubac were their very persons and their families. “We humbly beseech you, in the name of the whole community, to take pity on us for our misfortunes and listen to our petition . . . for we live in continual expectation of our total destruction.”

The day after he summoned the Tubac delegation, Captain Allande requested “as a Christian and a soldier” that Fray Francisco Garces comment on whether the presidio should remain at Tucson or move back to its former site, leaving ten or twelve men for the protection of San Xavier. “I regret immensely,” he wrote apologetically, “to put you to this trouble; but he who is in the dark begs illumination where he knows it exists in abundance.” He wanted the report in two days.

Father Garces’ response is missing. As principal advocate of missions for the Gila River Pimas, he would have fought a retreat from Tucson. He expected friars for the new missions any day. Tucson guarded the gateway to the Gila. It must be held.

The scared residents of Tubac did not get the presidio back. Colonel Anza, who had at least reinforced the Tucson garrison with men from the moribund Yaqui River presidio of Buenavista and with more Ópata scouts, left Sonora in March, 1778, to assume the governorship of New Mexico. The best Captain Allande could do was assign a detachment of a dozen to fourteen

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[21] Barragán, η al., Tucson, Nov. 24, 1777. The other two members of the delegation were Francisco Castro and Antonio Romero. Both the Yuma Sentinel (April 13, 1878) and the Mining and Scientific Press, XL (May 15, 1880), p. 312, picked up the story a century later.


men to protect “the old presidio of Tubac and the missions of Tumacácori, Calabazas, and San Xavier del Bac.”

What the friars had long dreaded happened suddenly in April, 1778. Fray Felipe Guillén, the red-faced, balding missionary of Tubutama, rode down the Altar Valley to his visita of Santa Teresa as he had done a hundred times before. After Mass and catechism he proceeded on downriver to call on Fray Juan Gorgoll at Ati. Halfway there, he ran into seven hostiles fleeing from Ati where they had just killed four persons. Before he could wheel his horse, a lance caught the friar square in the chest. He toppled off dead. In Chihuahua, Commandant General Croix’s personal chaplain, Fray Juan Agustín de Morfi, heard that the assailants had quartered Father Guillén’s body and hung the pieces in four trees. His diary reads, “Anza writes that the Apaches did damage in Old Tubac, in the pueblo of Calabazas, Pimería — seven dead.”

The day after Guillén’s death, Fathers Gorgoll, Eixarch, and Barbastro laid their martyred brother to rest at Ati before “all the Indians of Tubutama, Santa Teresa, Oquitoa, and Ati.” Croix was not exactly sympathetic. The friars again were begging for mission guards for the consolation of the missionaries intimidated by the death of Tubutama’s Fray Felipe Guillén, a lamentable occurrence but hardly surprising. After all, the Father was traveling through a most dangerous stretch with a small escort of but three Indians from his mission. The Apaches do not respect the priestly state, nor do they understand the sacrilege of killing a priest.

For most of his last three years at Tumacácori the rotund Fray Pedro Arriquibar had a compañero, Joaquín Antonio Belarde, thirty-two years old, about 5 feet 6 inches, blue-eyed with brown hair, was a city boy from Vitoria, still another Basque. He had become a Franciscan at the order’s imposing convento grande in Vitoria in 1764, the same year as Gaspar de Clemente and one year after Félix de Gamarra.

When the mission for the Querétaro college was announced in the chapter room of this palatial convent, said to have had its origin in a chapel dedicated in 1241 by Saint Francis himself, Belarde volunteered straightaway. But because he thought his loving parents, who lived in Vitoria, might try to dissuade him, Fray Joaquín asked that his license to join the missionary group be sent secretly. It was, and he set out with the others for the Puerto de Santa María. While they waited for passage Belarde reached the age for the priesthood, twenty-four. At the request of Comisario Juan Domingo Arricivita, the bishop of Cádiz ordained the young friar before they sailed.

He had come to Sonora in 1773, full of hope and zeal. As compañero to

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26Croix to Gálvez, Chihuahua, June 29, 1778, AGI, Guad., 276.
Matías Gallo, he shared the frustration of ministering to the Seris at Pitic. He had substituted for Font at San José de Pimas. In the fall of 1776, he was among the displaced friars at Imuris. When for their own safety Father President Ramos scattered them throughout Pimería Alta, Father Belarde drew San Xavier del Bac. And from there he moved down to Tumacácori, at least as early as September, 1777.27

The Indians of eighteenth-century Tumacácori — like those of twentieth-century San Xavier — doubtless had descriptive, earthy names for their friars. Among themselves they could have called Arriquibar Swollen Belly, Fat Butt, or worse: in the blue-eyed Belarde's case they were probably just as inventive. From the entries the two men wrote in the book of baptisms, marriages, and burials, one occasionally glimpses personality.

Arriquibar, it would seem, was rather careless, not at all systematic. When, for example, he baptized María Escolástica Morales, a Pima baby, he forgot to make an entry in the mission register. Seventeen years later María appeared before one of Arriquibar's successors with Gaspar Carrillo, a Yuma lad. They wanted to get married. The friar then discovered the book contained no record of her baptism. Fortunately Arriquibar was at Tucson. He said he remembered, the couple was married, and the missionary at Tumacácori rectified the omission, generously attributing it to Arriquibar's "muchas ocupaciones."

The two Basques worked together through the spring of 1779. Belarde left first, apparently again for San Xavier. He died "of a fever" at Cieneguilla, March 5, 1781, at the age of thirty-five. Arriquibar carried on another ten months, and seemingly was overjoyed to leave. When he married an Indian couple March 27, 1780, he wrote the entry with a grand flourish, taking up a whole valuable page of the book. Beneath his signature and title, a full four inches tall, he added in jubilation: "This was my last entry!"28

When Pedro de Arriquibar left Tumacácori, he took the Ramírez family with him. During his five years at the mission he had grown particularly close to Interpreter Juan Joseph Ramírez and his wife Manuela Sosa. He had baptized two of their children and had buried Juan Joseph's father, Tubac Militia Captain Juan Crisóstomo Ramírez, in the Tumacácori church.

At San Ignacio, where the bulky Basque endured through 1794, and afterward at Tucson, he provided for the Ramírez clan. After Juan Joseph died, he reared the children. In the Franciscan's dotage, Teodoro, one of Juan Joseph's younger sons, looked after him. Finally in 1820 when the venerable friar died, he left everything he had acquired as a military chaplain to Teodoro Ramírez, who for fifty years thereafter enjoyed rico status in Tucson.29

27 Arricivita, Lista, 1769. Madoz, Diccionario, vol. 16, p. 345. Arricivita, Crónica seráfica, p. 560. Lists of personnel, ACQ, M. Font to Ximénez, Nov. 30, 1776, and Jan. 20, 1777. Belarde seemed to take over burials at Tumacácori. A hiatus in the record, where several pages were removed, ends with Belarde's entry on Sept. 24, 1777. His last entry as Arriquibar's compañero at Tumacácori, also a burial, was dated May 30, 1779. DCB.

28 DCB. Arricivita, Crónica seráfica, p. 560. CSCQ, Difuntos.

No one at Tumacácori, or anywhere else in Sonora for that matter, felt any safer in November, 1779, when Commandant General Teodoro de Croix and his staff finally made their grand entry into forlorn Arizpe. Certainly the Apaches were not intimidated. Croix admitted as much in his monthly summaries from headquarters.

One dark night in early January, 1780, while Father Arriquibar was still at Tumacácori, four Apaches with three of their captives as accomplices tried to steal a flock of sheep from the mission. When the mayordomo discovered them in the act, they fled. At first light next day one of the captives was found hiding in the corral. Subdued, he was marched off to the presidio of Tucson for trial. His case was not unique. Disenchanted mission Indians and mix-bloods, especially from the large element of drifters and vagabonds in Sonora, sometimes fell in with Apache raiders, guiding and spying for them and sharing in the spoils.

In the same report Croix told how a dozen Apaches had brought down Brevet Captain Miguel de Urrea, son of the deceased Bernardo de Urrea, jumping him from ambush as he surveyed some of his holdings near Altar. He died after receiving the sacraments.30

Early that summer, only four leagues from Arizpe, an Apache war party estimated at no more than thirty rode down on Fray Francisco Perdigón and eight armed settlers returning from San Juan's Day festivities in Bacanuchi. Perdigón, chaplain of the Tucson garrison, had carried on a running feud with the imperious Captain Allande and had requested a transfer. It came too late. The screaming assault was too much for the members of his escort, who dashed pell-mell for their lives abandoning the chaplain to capture, torture, and death. His body, wrote Croix, the hostiles "covered with wounds from head to foot."31

In the Tumacácori cemetery on a muggy July day, a new missionary consigned to a grave Juan Ignacio Mesa, twenty-eight-year-old mission Indian.

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30 Extracto de novedades, Croix, Arizpe, March 26, 1780, AGI, Guad., 271. Reyes complained frequently of the spying vagabonds in Sonora and Sinaloa, e.g., to Felipe de Neve, Alamos, March 31, 1784, ibid., 247.

31 Extracto, Croix, Arizpe, July 23, 1780, ibid., 271. Papel de puntos, Roque de Medina, Tucson, May 3, 1779, ibid. For a blow-by-blow account, see Morfín, Diario, pp. 299–302. Francisco Perdigón had a Pima namesake at Tumacácori. About thirty years old, he too died in 1780, on Dec. 28. DCB.
killed by Apaches in the fields beyond the walls. Light-skinned with hazel brown hair and a scar on his tonsure, the sweating Fray Baltazar Carrillo would stick it out alone at this insecure mission for the next fifteen years. In fact, they would bury him there.

The people of Fitero, Carrillo’s hometown in southern Navarre, had a name for the gentle evening breeze that blew down from the mountains to cut the heat: they called it Favono, the Zephyr. Baltazar Carrillo was born in Fitero about 1734. The villa, its several hundred two- and three-story houses jammed together almost ludicrously, contained an interior labyrinth of narrow, crooked streets. Visitors swore that from some there was simply no way out. From a distance across fields and olive groves Fitero resembled a giant, irregular anthill in the broad plain of the Río Alhama. It was historic country fought over by the kings of Aragón, Castile, and Navarre.

Young Baltazar took the Franciscan habit in 1752 in the city of Logroño, some sixty miles northwest of Fitero. After seventeen years in the order, eight of them as master of novices, he volunteered from Pamplona for overseas missions. At thirty-five he was one of the oldest recruits for the college of Querétaro.

When Fray Antonio de los Reyes left Sonora for greener pastures in May, 1771, Baltazar Carrillo had replaced him at Cucurpe. With the Queretarans’ exit from Pimería Baja five and a half years later, Carrillo took refuge at San Ignacio with Fray Francisco Sánchez Zúñiga. There and probably elsewhere in Pimería Alta he served as a back-up man until early 1780. That year Sánchez Zúñiga departed San Ignacio for Spain and Fray Pedro de Arriquibar came down from Tumacacori to take his place. Carrillo went to Tumacacori.

Periodically the Spanish Crown restated its humanitarian principles regarding the treatment of Indians. Often these dictates of the royal conscience coincided with economic necessity. Teodoro de Croix understood that well enough — war with the British empire was imminent — but from his vantage point on the northern frontier the royal order of February 20, 1779, could not have reached him at a worse time. Just as his offensive along the entire frontier east of Sonora seemed to be gaining momentum, just as he set out for Arizpe to galvanize forces in that province, the king through José de Gálvez told him to try friendly persuasion.

Instead of a war of extermination against the barbarians of the north the commandant general was to fight only in defense of the existing Spanish
frontier. He must offer the hostiles the alternative of peaceful coexistence, providing them with gifts to soften them up and make them dependent on their Spanish suppliers. With Spain’s formal declaration of war on England in the summer of 1779, military aid that might have buttressed the Provincias Internas went instead to the Mississippi Valley and Gulf Coast theaters. Dutifully, Croix dropped his request for two thousand reinforcements. As for friendly persuasion of the bloody Apaches, that, he told Galvez, was out of the question. “There really is no means other than offensive war for restraining them.” Accordingly the Caballero gave first priority in Sonora to reorganizing the presidios, the bases from which he would carry war to the enemy.

To the embattled inhabitants of Hispanic Arizona, it seemed as if the military had forgotten them. Then in May, 1780, a heavily armed column rode in from Tucson escorting the aging veteran Jacobo de Ugarte y Loyola, military governor of Sonora, and Lieutenant Jerónimo de la Rocha of the Army Corps of Engineers. Everyone agreed that former Commandant-Inspector O’Conor had erred badly in moving presidios beyond the defensible line. Croix had sent Ugarte and Rocha to reconnoiter the terrain and tell him what was defensible and what was not.

The two officers concurred. The Fronteras garrison, isolated and ineffective in the valley of San Bernardino, must be moved back to its former site. The old Terrenate garrison transferred north to Santa Cruz by O’Conor had lost two captains and more than eighty men in five years. The remnants had fallen back on temporary quarters at Las Nutrias just east of crumbling Terrenate.

Much as don Manuel Barragán and his Tubac neighbors urged a return of the soldiers from Tucson, Ugarte and Rocha recommended against it. Even though that presidio, like Santa Fe in New Mexico, now lay well north of the line, it guarded the mission pueblos of San Xavier del Bac and San Agustín de Tucson, and it stood as a sentinel on the Gila-Colorado River road to California. Still, Governor Ugarte and Lieutenant Rocha had a plan.

To plug the gap between Las Nutrias and Tucson, to revitalize the entire valley from Tubac south along the river as far as abandoned Soamca, they would bid for a new presidio. Rocha found the spot, a broad mesa adjoining the arroyo of San Antonio, east of the river and no more than a dozen miles south of the ruins of Guevavi.

Over-optimistically, the governor and the engineer claimed that their projected presidio of San Rafael de Buenavista, taking its name from an old estancia, would protect Tubac, Tumacácori, and Calabazas. It would permit the repeopling of Sonoita, Guevavi, and Soamca, and the whole fertile big bend, “covering with livestock the beautiful valleys, ruined haciendas, and ranchos.

36Croix, Oct. 30, 1781.
of Buenavista, San Luis, Ranchito, Santa Bárbara, and San Lázaro.”37 The old-timers doubted it.

Croix did pull back Fronteras and Terrenate, and he left Tucson where it was. No presidio of San Rafael de Buenavista was ever built. Though Governor Ugarte did raise a company of Pima Indians known by that name, they spent five years stationed at Mission San Ignacio and elsewhere before moving to Tubac in 1787.

Meantime the Apaches took pretty much what they wanted. Father Carrillo struggled to maintain the population of Calabazas and Tumacácori by recruiting desert Papagos. As for Manuel Barragán and some of the other frightened Tubac settlers, they found a way out. Lured by government subsidies of tools and seed, animals and free land, they answered the call to settle a rich new country among friendly Indians — the Río Colorado of the Yumas.

The Yuma Salvador Palma had returned to his people with his head full of what he had seen at the viceroy’s court. The Spaniards had promised him missionaries and gifts and a chance to live like they did. If indeed all this came to pass — and he had seen for himself that it could — he, Olleyquote-quietobe, would ride through the streets of his capital in a carriage and silks. In the meantime he held on to his precariously exalted position with some of the Yumas as the favored one of the Spaniards. But nothing happened. The people began to mock him. In desperation Palma came in from the Colorado and begged don Pedro Tueros, captain at Altar and interim military governor of the province. Where were the gifts? Were Spaniards not men of their word?38

Commandant General Croix had received the royal orders of February 10 and 14, 1777, approving missionaries and a presidio for the Yumas and continued gratification of Palma.39 He had acknowledged them but not complied. He had too much else to worry about. Finally on February 5, 1779, at the urgent request of Captain Tueros, Croix made a feeble move from his sickbed at Chihuahua. Until he could get to Sonora and take personal charge, he wanted Father Garcés and a companion to go to the Colorado, reassure Palma and his people, and prepare them for baptism. The Caballero intended to ride out and meet the Yumas himself. But for now he was gambling.

Dissatisfied and apprehensive, the ruddy-faced Fray Francisco Antonio Barbastro, president of the Pimería Alta missions since 1777, summoned Garcés and Juan Díaz to Tubutama to discuss the risks. It had been three years since Fray Tomás Eixarch had lived with the Yumas. Everyone knew

37 Rocha’s report as quoted by Croix, ibid.
they were fickle. Despite his boasts, Chief Palma could speak only for his own rancheria, a small fraction of the three thousand Yumas. Certainly no permanent Yuma mission could exist without the support of a strong garrison. None of the friars liked the makeshift nature of Croix's proposal.

But they decided to go ahead. The commandant general had promised to visit the Colorado personally and make all necessary arrangements then. He had ordered Intendant-Governor Pedro Corbalán and Captain Tueros to
provision the two friars and give them an escort. Tueros made it clear that he could spare only a few men, but Garcés could pick them.\footnote{Tueros to Barbastro, Horcasitas, March 15, 1779, ACQ.}

Father Garcés remembered Viceroy Bucareli's reputation for pious works and his personal interest in the land route to California. Writing direct in March, 1779, Garcés begged Bucareli for alms to buy gifts for the Indians. Because there would be at first only one mission at the Yuma crossing all the tribes of the area would flock in. But before Garcés' plea reached the capital Viceroy Bucareli died, and the executors of his estate said no.\footnote{Garces to Bucareli, Ati, March 11, 1779, AGN, PI, 246.}

The project began to abort almost from the start. The continuity that Juan Bautista de Anza, Bucareli, or even O'Connor might have provided was lacking. Croix's late arrival in Sonora, his necessary preoccupation with rebellious Seris and rampaging Apaches, to say nothing of the austerity imposed on him by the war with Great Britain — all contributed.

After months of frustrating delay, Garcés, Díaz, and a dozen soldiers had set out across the desert for Yuma in the hellish month of August. When the rest turned back, Garcés and a couple of soldiers pushed on. The Yumas crowded around them, these jaded, sweaty representatives of what Salvador Palma had seen in the viceroy's palace. Finally someone had come.

Put off so long, the Yumas were greedy. Palma had harangued them: there would be gifts, gifts, and more gifts. The meager stock of tobacco, cloth, and glass beads brought by the friar satisfied no one. No longer were the Yumas sharing: they wanted something in exchange for maize or fish. They were more unruly than Garcés remembered. Palma seemed to have little control. Against the expressed desire of the Spaniards, the Yumas were making war on neighboring tribes. The arrival of Díaz and ten more grumbling soldiers early in October added more mouths to feed but little security.

When the friars got word that Croix was in Arizpe, Díaz rode all the way in for a hearing. Two unprecedented, make-do military colony-missions, theoretically able to defend themselves but costing far less than a single presidio, grew out of their talks. With bitter hindsight Franciscan chronicler Juan Domingo Arricivita would condemn the compromise and brand Croix an "Artisan of Death."

In essence the Caballero was ordering two Spanish towns of twenty-five families each set down in the midst of three thousand wrought-up heathens two hundred and fifty miles beyond the last garrison. The missionaries, divested of all but limited spiritual authority, were to instruct, baptize, and persuade the Yumas to join the Spanish settlements. Nothing in three centuries of spiritual conquest, claimed Arricivita, recommended this aberrant scheme. But the friars were committed.\footnote{Arricivita quoted sections of Croix's instructions, signed at Arizpe in March, 1780, and commented on them. Crónica seráfica, pp. 497–504. The entire text was quoted by Fr. Diego Miguel Bringas de Manzaneda y Encinas, Informe al Rey sobre las misiones de la Pimería Alta, sobre nuevas fundaciones, sobre las malas providencias de la Comandancia, la paz mal establecida con los Apaches, y otros muchos asuntos importantes, 1796, par. 64, CC, 202.42. Daniel S. Matson and Bernard L. Fontana of the Arizona State Museum are translating and preparing the Bringas report for publication.}
Thirty-five-year-old Ensign don Santiago de Islas would command the new settlements. A native of Italy, Islas had come up through the ranks of the Dragoon Regiment of México. On the frontier he had ridden nine times in pursuit of Apaches. But despite the zeal with which he sought them, he had yet to meet them in battle. His military record was unblemished. “This officer,” reported an inspector, “is fit for the training and discipline of troops put under his command.”

In the fall of 1780 Islas reined up in the depressed ex-presidio of Tubac with a message of hope. Who would join him and Señora de Islas in a new start on the broad Río Colorado? No need to fear the Yumas: they had begged the Spaniards to come. Already friars — they all knew Father Garces — were living among them. Besides, the commandant general had provided for soldiers, who were taking their families, twenty men, enough to strike the fear of God into any pack of heathen Indians.

In addition to land and water — more than they ever had at Tubac — there were other inducements. Each colonist family would receive ten pesos a month for the first year. The government would advance each of them a yoke of oxen, two cows, one bull, two mares, and tools. A dozen laborers were being enrolled to help them build new homes and corrals. Who would sign up for ten years?

Don Manuel Barragán, son of Juan Nepomuceno Barragán and husband of Francisca Olguín, had long been a prominent citizen of Tubac. He had led his community in its bid to get the garrison moved back from Tucson. Now he led again. He and doña Francisca would sign. Joseph Olguín and María Ignacia Hurtado had three small children to think of. But they would go. Others came forward.

Packing what they could of their poor possessions, these refugees from Tubac joined the caravan for the Colorado. What was there to lose? Most of the families from Tucson they already knew. Some Tucson recruits had gone ahead to Altar. Some of the soldiers, men like corporals Pasqual Rivera and Juan Miguel Palomino and trooper Joseph Ignacio Martínez, had been to Yuma with Anza. They had stories to tell about the great river, the watermelons, and the free Yuma women.

As Santiago de Islas prepared his ragbag emigrant train for the Camino del Diablo, Fray Juan Díaz wrote Croix from La Purísima Concepción del Río Colorado. All was not well. Food was critically short. The Yumas had murderously raided a neighboring tribe. Ignacio, a brother of Palma, was reported exhorting the youth to rise up and kill the Spaniards. Díaz doubted they would. But he was cautious. “From the cowardice of these Indians I do not suppose they would go through with it, but is is always well to remove such a perverse influence from the tribe.”

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43 Islas, Hoja de servicios, Dec. 31, 1780, AGI, Guad., 281 bis.
45 Díaz to Croix, Concepción, Nov. 8, 1780, et al., ibid.
Two days after Christmas Islas pulled in with men, women, children, cattle, horses, and bleating sheep. The ensign, eager to inspire confidence, began shouting orders and laying out the colony. By mid-January, 1781, the Spaniards had two settlements, both on the California side, Concepción across from today’s Yuma, and San Pedro y San Pablo de Bicuiier, some four leagues upstream. Two more friars, Juan Antonio Joaquín de Barreneche and Joseph Matías Moreno, had joined Garcés and Díaz as compañeros.46

The low budget Colorado River experiment in communal coexistence, settlers and soldiers and friars and Yumas all living together, faltered for six months. The Spanish intruders, less than two hundred among thousands, took Yuma lands, let their stock browse Yuma crops and mesquite trees, introduced the whipping post, and made no secret of their contempt.

The friars baptized Yuma children and old people, cried out against the stupidity of warfare, slaving, and sexual license, and tried to move their catechumens away from the corrupting influence of the other Spaniards. Ensign Islas wanted ten pairs of irons and two cannon in case there was trouble, but he did not bother to post guards.47

As the heat built up on the Río Colorado till the settlers could hardly stand it, Fray Baltazar Carrillo at Tumacácori battled the smallpox. Beginning in mid-1779 a raging epidemic of the disease, with its frightful fever and skin eruptions, had spread through central New Spain. In Mexico City a physician had set up a clinic to administer inoculation, but no one came — the people were afraid. Hundreds died in the Río Grande pueblos of New Mexico early in 1781. At Tumacácori during one five-week period between Tuesday, May 29, and Monday, July 2, 1781, the overworked Father Carrillo buried twenty-two bodies, about one for every ten of his charges.48

In the house he had appropriated in Arizpe, Commandant General Teodoro de Croix sat working over a draft of his 608-paragraph general report to José de Gálvez. Paragraphs 521 to 534 he devoted to the flourishing Colorado River establishments. He was proud of the money he had saved. The docile Yumas were responding favorably to conversion, and Croix could foresee the banks of the Río Colorado blanketed with crops and herds and securely peopled by loyal vassals of the crown. Already the new colonies had insured the road to California.

At this very time, wrote Croix, Captain Fernando Xavier de Rivera y Moncada was marching via the Colorado with settlers, soldiers, stock, and

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supplies for hard-up California. Rivera would send settlers and supplies ahead while he fattened up hundreds of horses and mules too weak to cross the river. "In any event the expedition is now beyond danger of enemies. The worst difficulties have been overcome and the vital supplies are very close to New California." 49

Before the commandant general had finished his report, a rider from Tucson brought incredible news. Croix was stunned. For days he spoke of "the depressing though unconfirmed news." But as evidence piled up he held council, dispatched orders, then added a couple of terse marginal notes to his report.

The friars, settlers, and soldiers on the Colorado were dead. Rivera and the men who had stayed behind with him slaughtered like the rest. The Yumas had risen.

The first jumbled word of the massacre, passed from ranchería to ranchería among the Papagos and then to the Gila Pimas, had reached the presidio at Tucson on August 5. Next day Father Velderrain of San Xavier, who understood Pima, interviewed the Gila informant and concluded that the reports were false. He recommended that acting Captain Juan Manuel de Bonilla not alarm the commandant general until the story could be verified. Bonilla overruled the friar. He had dispatched the rider to Arizpe that very day. 50

It was weeks before the grisly details fit together. The Yumas had struck and overrun both settlements on Tuesday morning, July 17, 1781. At Concepción, Father Garcés was celebrating Mass. The Yumas at first spared him and his zealous compañero Barreneche along with the women and children. Ensign Islas went down under a mien of war clubs: his mangled body the attackers jubilantly threw into the river.

Upriver at Bicuiñer, Fray Juan Díaz and Fray Joseph Matías Moreno, the ex-Tumacácori friar who had been so obsessed with martyrdom as a youth, both died in the initial onslaught. Someone chopped off Moreno’s head with an ax. Next day across the river a horde of Yumas swarmed over the crude barricades thrown up by Captain Rivera and his few soldiers. And on Thursday they sought out and at the urging of a former servant and interpreter killed Father Barreneche and Father Garcés, the one missionary no one thought the Yumas would harm.

Croix ordered competent Lieutenant Colonel don Pedro Fages of the Catalan Volunteers to the Colorado with an expedition hastily marshaled in Sonora. If the Yumas met them in peace only Palma and the other instigators were to be seized: if they wanted more war, Fages was to give it to them. The commandant general decreed the ransom of the Christian survivors at any price, but once the captives were safe, the soldiers should take back everything, as well as all the booty they could recover, since these negotia-


tions had "no other end than saving the lives of the king's vassals who are in the Indians' power."51

Fages failed to humble the Yumas, or even to take the rebel leaders, but he did parley. For tobacco and other goods he ransomed seventy-four captives, mostly women and children. He compiled another list of the dead, in all one hundred and four.

The Spaniards at Tumacacori had known many of the victims— not only the friars and the Tucson soldiers but also their compadres Manuel Barragán and his wife Francisca Olguín; Joseph Olguín; Francisco Castro, whose

wife and eight-year-old son survived; and Juan Romero, whose wife and three children perished with him.52

The remains of the four slain missionaries, packed in a couple of empty cigarette crates found near Bicuñer, rode on muleback to Tubutama. Depressed and embittered, Father President Barbastro buried them under the sanctuary floor on the gospel side. Later they were dug up and returned to the college, where the entire community joined in funeral rites on July 19, 1794, the thirteenth anniversary of their murder.53

In February, 1782, Barbastro solicited from Lieutenant Colonel Fages an account of the Yuma tragedy based on the sworn declarations of survivors. According to Fages’ statement, the four friars had lived and died on the Río Colorado in an exemplary manner. They were, he testified, absolutely blameless. They had died gloriously in the eyes of the Lord. For several years the Father President continued to collect supporting testimony, including that of doña María Ana Montiel, widow of Santiago de Islas.54

In California, Fray Junípero Serra, who had known both Garces and Díaz, wondered if the four dead Queretaranos lacked anything, canonically speaking, to be hailed as martyrs. “It is worth contemplating,” wrote Juan Domingo Arricivita, the recruiter who had brought Fray Joseph Matías Moreno from Spain a dozen years earlier,

that the barbarians did not cut off the heads of the other three missionaries, only that of Father Moreno. Although it has been impossible to learn if it occurred while he was alive or after death, what is certain, since beheading is the epitome of all other forms of martyrdom, is that the Lord wished thereby to fulfill the ardent desires the Father had, almost from childhood, to suffer martyrdom.55

Teodoro de Croix blamed Anza and the deceased Father Garces. They had misrepresented the Yunas. “I think the pretty notions they presented to the government about the Yuma nation were more the products of religious zeal, a desire to serve, and love on the part of the first for laudable labors and on the part of the second for apostolic labors, than of reality.”

In truth, said Croix, the Yumas were no different from other Indians on this frontier, “more or less treacherous, inconstant, stubborn, and wild.” Salvador Palma had no more claim to kingship over his people than any Apache capitancillo. Because Palma had expected the gifts and special treatment to go on forever, the uprising was inevitable. Nothing the commandant

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general could have done would have sufficed to quench "the extravagant
greed of the Yumas."56

After a combined Sonora-California punitive expedition under Fages
and California Governor Felipe de Neve failed to subdue the Yumas in the
late summer of 1782, Croix gave up. A presidio on the Colorado was not only
impractical, it was unnecessary. Whenever supplies or remounts were needed
in California, an expedition could easily force the crossing. The Yumas were
not so tough.57

The disaster at Yuma in 1781 was a major setback to José de Gálvez' imperial design. To the friars of the Querétaro college it was a poignant indi­
cation of what they could expect from the Provincias Internas.

If anything, Indian hostilities in Sonora had increased since 1776. Father Guillén had died while riding between two of his pueblos. To the friars, Croix's achievements — pulling back a couple of presidios, the “opening” of an indirect trail by Anza from New Mexico to Sonora late in 1780,58 and a pile of recom­
mendations on paper — seemed small consolation for his neglect of their mis­
sions and their proposals for expansion.59

They knew that the commandant general had his problems, that he labored
under the burden of wartime austerity, that his responsibilities extended over
two thousand miles of exposed frontier. But they did not forgive him. They
held up Croix's poor bastard settlements on the Colorado against the proper
missions and presidios proposed by Viceroy Bucareli — overlooking for the
time the ill-supported Seri mission at Carrizal where Father Gil de Bernabé
had died.60

The friars never got over the disaster of 1781. Their disenchantment with
the General Command of the Provincias Internas lasted as long as it did,
another forty years. They disputed mightily with some of Croix's successors,
particularly Pedro de Nava and Nemesio Salcedo. On their knees they begged
that Pimería Alta be returned to the viceroy's jurisdiction, believing that he
represented more perfectly the king's desire to convert the native American
than did the military-minded comandante.

But they never convinced the king.

56 Croix to Gálvez, Feb. 28, 1782.
57 Croix to Gálvez, Arizpe, Jan. 23, 1783, AGI, Guad., 518. Navarro García, Gálvez,
pp. 395-96.
58 Extracto, Croix, Arizpe, Jan. 23, 1781, AGI, Guad., 271. Thomas, Forgotten Frontiers,
p. 51n.
59 Father Lino Gómez Canedo, O.F.M., assesses Croix as “a diligent man with a reputation
for energy, a great producer of reports: the results of his administration were in reality
inferior to appearances. I do not share the admiration for him of his principal biographer,
Alfred B. Thomas. . . . Rudeness is not equivalent to energy, nor does a great bureaucratic
shuffling of papers always indicate valid results." Sonora, p. 51n.
60 Bringas, Informe al Rey. Chapman's assertion, Spanish California, pp. 407-409 that
the “mongrel" settlements were the idea of Garcés and Díaz appears unfounded. Certainly
Croix took all the credit as long as things seemed to be going well. Bringas claimed that it
was Asesor Pedro Galindo Navarro who actually worked out the details of the Yuma
establishments. Informe al Rey, par. 59.