

THE EXPLORATION AND PRELIMINARY COLONIZATION OF THE *SENO*
MEXICANO UNDER DON JOSÉ DE ESCANDÓN (1747-1749): AN ANALYSIS
BASED ON PRIMARY SPANISH MANUSCRIPTS

A Dissertation

by

DEBBIE S. CUNNINGHAM

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

August 2010

Major Subject: Hispanic Studies

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,	Brian Imhoff
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ABSTRACT

The Exploration and Preliminary Colonization of the *Seno Mexicano* Under Don José de Escandón (1747-1749): An Analysis Based on Primary Spanish Manuscripts.

(August 2010)

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In 1747, José de Escandón led an expeditionary force into the *Seno Mexicano*, the remote northern frontier of New Spain, which had developed into a safe haven for rebellious natives who had fled to the region as they resisted Spanish domination in the interior provinces. News of foreign encroachment into the region prompted officials in New Spain to renew their efforts to explore and pacify the region. Within three and one-half months, the area that had resisted previous attempts at exploration had been thoroughly explored and mapped. In December, 1748, Escandón set out to colonize the newly explored region, named Nuevo Santander. During the preliminary colonization of Nuevo Santander from 1748 to 1749, Escandón founded fourteen settlements along the Río Grande.

In this study, I transcribe, translate, and study all primary Spanish manuscripts documenting the exploration of the *Seno Mexicano*, and the preliminary colonization of the newly founded province of Nuevo Santander. I provide the first English annotated translation of Escandón's *Informe* documenting the exploration of the *Seno Mexicano*, and the first English-language account of the preliminary colonization of Nuevo Santander that is based on all available manuscripts documenting the event: Escandón's *Autos* and Friar Simón del Hierro's *Diario*.

Escandón accomplished what no Spaniard before him could. He successfully explored the *Seno Mexicano*, and began colonizing the newly founded province of Nuevo Santander. Under Escandón's colonization design, for the first and only time in the history of New Spain, Spanish officials relied on colonists rather than soldiers and priests to colonize a region. This colonization design had a definitive impact on the future development of the region, and provided the framework under which a civilian ranching industry would emerge and flourish. Escandón was one of the most important people in 18th century New Spain, and the impact of his accomplishments and unique colonization plan is still evident today on both sides of the Río Grande.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the memory of my Grandma Bales, whom I miss everyday.

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I would like to thank Dr. Brian Imhoff for his guidance and support during my graduate studies at Texas A&M University. Thanks to the instruction that Professor Imhoff provided in transcribing colonial Spanish manuscripts, I have an area in which I can research and publish for decades to come, and I'm very appreciative of the skills I've developed while working with him. I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. Stephen Miller, Dr. Nancy Joe Dyer, Dr. Armando Alonzo, and Dr. April Hatfield, for their instruction and support throughout the course of this research.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In 1747 Colonel Don José de Escandón led an expedition into the unexplored region of the *Seno Mexicano*,¹ the area of modern-day Northern Mexico and Southern Texas. According to Carlos E. Castañeda, “in three months a virgin area of 12,000 square miles, inhabited by apostates and barbarous Indians, who had resisted all previous efforts of the Spaniards to subdue them, had been thoroughly and completely explored, surveyed, and mapped.”² In contrast to previous Spanish expeditions into unexplored areas, Escandón applied the tactics of a military campaign to the exploration plan, and ordered seven detachments to simultaneously converge over the area from different departure points. The plan outlined by Escandón had many advantages. It made it easier to explore and map the entire area from all directions all at once and it would take less time than if one party was to march and counter-march over the entire area.³

Colonel Escandón selected leaders for the detachments from each entry point and instructed them on their respective departure dates and exploration routes. In addition to instructing each captain on which route he was to follow, Escandón also ordered that they write a report detailing their activities, and meet him at the mouth of the Río Grande

This dissertation follows the style of *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*.

¹ The *Seno Mexicano* is the area between Tampico and Matagorda Bay. Donald E. Chipman, “Spanish Texas,” in Ron Tyler, Douglas E. Barnett, Roy R. Barkley, Penelope C. Anderson, and Mark F. Odintz (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas* (6 vols.; Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996), VI, 17.

² Carlos E. Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas: 1519-1936*, 7 volumes, (Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones, 1936), II, 142.

³ *Ibid.*, 141.

once they had completed their respective exploration.⁴ In January 1747, seven divisions with a total of 765 soldiers descended into the unexplored region; the expedition into the *Seno Mexicano* led by Escandón lasted until March 1747.⁵

With the exploration of the *Seno Mexicano* complete, Escandón faced the task of recommending settlements for the newly explored area.⁶ On October 26, 1747, he signed the report in which he narrated the expedition led under his command, provided detailed descriptions of the land, and proposed sites for settlements and missions in the newly charted region.⁷ Of the fourteen suggested settlements, three were to be located in the present State of Texas: one at Llano de Flores, a town with the same name as the nearby plain; one on the banks of the Nueces River, in the area of present Río Grande City; and the third at Santa Dorotea on the banks of the San Antonio River, six leagues from the head of San Antonio Bay.⁸ The other eleven settlements were to be founded in the present state of Tamaulipas, Mexico.⁹ Twelve of the settlements founded from December 1748-May 1749 survive today.¹⁰

On May 31, the *Auditor de Guerra*, the Marquis de Altamar, approved Escandón's entire plan for the establishment of fourteen towns and missions.¹¹ He suggested the new territory be officially renamed *Nuevo Santander* based on Escandón's

⁴ Ibid., 140-142.

⁵ Ibid., 142.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ José de Escandón, Informe al Virrey (AGN, PI), vol. 179, folios 145r-195r.

⁸ Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, II, 150-151.

⁹ Hubert J. Miller, *José de Escandón: Colonizer of Nuevo Santander* (Edinburg: New Santander Press, 1980), 13.

¹⁰ The number of settlement is derived from my research conducted for notes to the translation in Chapter IV.

¹¹ Marqués de Altamira to Escandón, Letter (Archivo General de la Nación, México, Provincias Internas; cited hereafter as AGN, PI), vol. 179, folio 234r8-11.

recommendation, given the resemblance of the land to that of his native province in Spain.¹² In addition, Escandón was appointed as governor of the newly founded province.¹³ In order to accomplish the proposed colonization, Escandón noted that three strategic implementations were necessary: first, the soldiers who would serve as settlers should be offered lands and all the respective privileges that accompany the title of first settlers; second, the missionaries who would serve the proposed missions should be appointed from the College of the Propaganda Fide; and finally, no presidios should be founded, due to their expense and ineffectiveness. Instead, the soldiers who were chosen to colonize would serve to protect the recently founded settlements from native attacks.¹⁴

On December 1, 1748, Escandón departed from Querétaro with 750 soldiers and more than 2,500 settlers en route to colonize the lands of the *Seno Mexicano*. According to Bolton, this was “probably the largest caravan that ever went into the interior provinces to found a colony.”¹⁵ Along the northward march, Escandón and his caravan passed through San Luis Potosí and then headed northeastward into the mountains to Tula. On December 25, Escandón founded Santa María de Llera, the first of the settlements. The preliminary colonization of Nuevo Santander, during which an additional thirteen settlements were founded, was completed by May 1749. In the decade that followed, Escandón would found nine other towns, including Laredo, Texas. In all, Escandón was responsible for founding twenty-three towns in Nuevo Santander,

¹² José de Escandón, Informe al Virrey (AGN, PI), vol. 179, folio 211v16-18. It should be noted that this area does not today resemble Escandón’s homeland of Cantabria, Santander, Spain.

¹³ Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, II, 153-55.

¹⁴ Escandón, Informe al Virrey, folios 173r6-175r9.

¹⁵ Herbert E. Bolton, *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century: Studies in Spanish Colonial History and Administration* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970), 294.

and the impact of his colonization design, which I will discuss in Chapter VI, is still evident today.

Father Simón del Hierro, a Franciscan missionary from the College of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe in Zacatecas, accompanied Escandón during the colonization expedition from December 1748 to April 1749, and kept a detailed diary of events. Father Hierro was a vocal critic of Escandón and his colonization plan. Specifically, he was displeased with Escandón's failure to found missions near settlement sites during the initial colonization phase, as Escandón had proposed. For example, during the founding of the Villa of Santander, Hierro reproached Escandón, noting Escandón "had lacked to do what was most important, which was to assign a place for a mission for the town, and that this was the reason for which Hierro had come, and this was what the Patent that he brought with him ordered him to do, and that it did not mention founding towns, but rather missions, and that if the natives did not have a place to live and raise their crops, that this was sufficient reason for them not to gather, etc."¹⁶ Hierro notes Escandón's failure to found missions throughout his diary, and his dismay at this practice.

The discord between Escandón and Hierro was perhaps not personal. In an earlier report to the King, Escandón had criticized the missionaries and exposed their continued acceptance of synods, even for missions that had long been abandoned or were operating without serving the natives for whom they were erected.¹⁷ With regard

¹⁶ Simón del Hierro, *Diario que Hizo el Padre Fray Simón del Yerro en el Seno Mexicano, Año de 1749* (AGN, México, Historia,) vol. 29, folios 215r19-215v2. All translations from the manuscripts presented in this dissertation are my own.

¹⁷ Escandón, *Informe al Virrey*, folio 177r15-25.

to an inactive mission that was founded by the Río Verde jurisdiction of the Province of Michoacán in July, 1617, Escandón notes, “in the 130 years that have elapsed since this mission was founded, the synod of 300 pesos each year has been charged for supporting the religious, as if one had been there.”¹⁸ Escandón was a vocal opponent of the ineffectiveness of the missions, and noted the economic strain they placed on the royal hacienda, writing, “these missions serve only to consume the royal hacienda without fruit.”¹⁹

In addition to criticizing Escandón for failing to found the missions at the same time as the settlements, Hierro noted what he considered to be conceptual problems with Escandón’s colonization strategy. Specifically, Friar Hierro questioned whether some of these settlements could survive due to the lack of water necessary for irrigating crops and the constant threat of native attacks. Further, he questioned the manner in which Escandón reassured disconsolate colonists by promising some of them titles of nobility and plots of land through which they would be able to acquire wealth.²⁰ Interestingly, Hierro’s diary was later used as evidence against Escandón, who was brought up on charges of poor administration in 1775. The conceptual issues Hierro notes in his diary will be carefully examined in Chapter V.

Despite Escandón’s successful exploration of the *Seno Mexicano*, which “stands unsurpassed in the history of American colonization,”²¹ and his colonization efforts in the Province of Nuevo Santander, he and his achievements remain marginalized in the

¹⁸ Ibid., folio 177r13-26.

¹⁹ Ibid., folio 177r24-36.

²⁰ Hierro, *Diario*, folio 220r15-23.

²¹ Carlos E. Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas: 1519-1936*, 7 volumes, (Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones, 1936), II, 142.

historiography of the Southwest.²² In 1999, David Weber noted in his discussion of the colonization of Nuevo Santander, “for a more detailed account of Escandón’s development of Nuevo Santander see Hill (1926), still the standard study.”²³ According to Patricia Osante, “there is an enormous void of knowledge in the history of the founding of Tamaulipas,” for which Escandón was responsible.²⁴

The understanding of Spanish history in the Old World and New World alike has been obstructed by a number of issues, including: difficult access to primary Spanish documents, dependence upon unreliable English translations of these documents, and/or a lack of extant or reliable English translations of some of these Spanish documents from the colonial period.²⁵ In 1984, Leiby noted that the study of certain periods of the history of New Spain was limited by the lack of translated primary materials.²⁶ Since then, some progress has been made in providing translations of Spanish source material to aid in the study of the history of the Southwest. However, the vast majority of Spanish colonial manuscripts remain un-translated. As a result, the events that these manuscripts document may remain marginalized in the historiographies of the regions that treat them.

²² In his important work on Spanish expeditions into Texas, William C. Foster excludes Escandón’s expedition, even though it falls well within the scope of his study; cf William C. Foster, *Spanish expeditions into Texas 1689-1768* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995).

²³ David J. Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 433n107.

²⁴ Patricia Osante, *Testimonio Acerca de la Causa Formada en la Colonia del Nuevo Santander al Coronel don José de Escandón: Estudio Preliminar, Transcripción y Notas*, (Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de México, 2000), v.

²⁵ Some English translations are based on copies of the original manuscript and do not represent the original content. In worst case scenarios, these translations are based on copies of copies of the original and are even more corrupted.

²⁶ John S. Leiby, *Report to the King: Colonel Juan Camargo y Cavallero’s Historical Account of New Spain, 1815* (New York: Peter Lang, 1984), 1.

It is my objective in this project to present a thorough analysis of Escandón's activities in the *Seno Mexicano* that is based on all extant primary Spanish sources. The scope of the project includes the exploration of the region conducted in 1747, as well as the preliminary colonization of the newly founded province of Nuevo Santander from 1748-49. In Chapter II, I present a review of literature of previous works on Escandón and the history of the region. In Chapter III, I provide a comprehensive historical background of the region under investigation, and examine the reasons for which the Spanish crown sought to extend control over its northernmost frontier in New Spain through Escandón. In Chapter IV, I provide an annotated translation of Escandón's report to the viceroy from 1747, which provides a firsthand account of the exploration of the *Seno Mexicano* led by Escandón. This is the first English translation of this manuscript ever produced. Next, in Chapter V, I present an account of the preliminary colonization of Nuevo Santander from 1748-49, based on Escandón's reports and Friar Simón del Hierro's diary documenting this period. It should be noted that Father Hierro's diary has not been edited or translated in any language; as a result, information from this diary has not been fully incorporated into the historical record pertaining to the colonization of Nuevo Santander led by Colonel Escandón. In Chapter VI, I present an analysis of Escandón's accomplishments and their importance for the social and economic development of the region, and conclude my study. Transcriptions of all primary Spanish manuscripts under investigation in this study, produced in accordance

with best practices adopted from the Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, are available in supplemental files to this dissertation.²⁷

This is the first study ever based on all extant source documents detailing Escandón's activities in Nuevo Santander during the period under investigation. It is my objective to make these documents and their translations accessible to a wide audience, and to provide an update analysis of the exploration and colonization of Nuevo Santander (1747-49), including highlighting Escandón's contributions to the development of a civilian ranching industry in Nuevo Santander. In my translations, I have included notes to clarify, expand on, and explain items. I gloss indigenous terms and define them where appropriate. I also take great care to include notes that I feel are critical for understanding these texts.

Donald Chipman notes, "Colonel Escandón was one of the ablest and most powerful men on the frontier of northern New Spain, and he had served the Spanish crown for five and a half decades, as soldier, pacificator, explorer, colonizer, and administrator."²⁸ On the modern-day Mexican side of the Río Grande, the people of Tamaulipas have not neglected to commemorate the name of their founder; however such widespread commemoration is not evident along the Texas side of Río Grande."²⁹ It is my hope that the story told in the following pages of this dissertation will be the first step in reviving the story of José de Escandón and his importance for the overall

²⁷ David Mackenzie, *A Manual of Manuscript Transcription for the Dictionary of the Old Spanish Language* (Madison: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1997).

²⁸ Donald E. Chipman and Harriet Denise Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999), 124.

²⁹ Miller, *José de Escandón*, 38.

development of Nuevo Santander and Texas, by extension, and that he may be rescued from the obscurity to which he has been relegated.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Although Escandón enjoyed a lengthy military and administrative career, relatively few scholars have focused their studies on him. For English-speaking scholars, this is primarily due to the lack of English translations of original source materials documenting Escandón's activities, as noted in Chapter I. In 1926, Lawrence F. Hill wrote the first English-language work on José de Escandón and the founding of Nuevo Santander.³⁰ However, by his own admission, his study was “not intended as a definitive treatment of José de Escandón or even on the founding of Nuevo Santander. It is rather . . . a summarized account of a movement in which Escandón plays a leading part.”³¹ According to Hill, prior to his study, the only available accounts of the subject in English, those of Hubert Howe Bancroft and Herbert E. Bolton, were nothing more than mere sketches.³² Likewise, in Spanish, Prieto's attempt, besides being based on inadequate materials, left the early phases of colonization in the region practically untouched.³³

In his study, Hill explores the development of regions bordering Nuevo Santander and provides an overview of the state of affairs on the eve of exploration of the *Seno Mexicano*. He contrasts the development in these provinces with that of Nuevo

³⁰ Lawrence F. Hill, *José de Escandón and the Founding of Nuevo Santander* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 1926).

³¹ *Ibid.*, ii.

³² Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Mexico, III* (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft & Company, 1883); Herbert E. Bolton, *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century* (Austin: University of Texas, 1970).

³³ Alejandro Prieto, *Historia, Geografía y Estadística del Estado de Tamaulipas* (Mexico City: Manuel Porrúa, 1949); Hill, *José de Escandón*, iii.

Santander, and explains that the neglected *Seno Mexicano* had been filled with natives who refused to submit to the Spanish conquerors. In order to protect the surrounding settlements from the ravages of rebellious natives, and in order to forestall any attempt at intrusion by foreign powers, it became a necessity for the Spanish colonial administration to occupy the *Seno Mexicano*.³⁴

Relying on secondary sources, Hill presents a summary of the land and natives of the *Seno Mexicano* and illustrates how treacherous the region proved to be for Europeans who had attempted to enter the region prior to the 1740s. Hill devotes a chapter to the attempts at exploration of the region prior to Escandón's entry in 1747, relying primarily on González.³⁵ Next, he moves to an analysis of Escandón's *entrada* itself, and notes, "the method to be used in reducing Nuevo Santander grew out of Escandón's long experience in the Sierra Gorda where he had founded many missions and towns."³⁶

Hill thoroughly examines the founding of the first establishments in Nuevo Santander, focusing on the period from 1748-49. He utilizes Friar Hierro's diary in writing his summary of the preliminary colonization, and notes, "though the account is frequently referred to as a diary, it does not seem that the recordings were made daily. There is little doubt, however, that the incidents were written up while vivid in the author's mind."³⁷

Hill documents the establishment of settlements from 1750-55, and discusses the failed settlement of Vedoya in this section. He explores the reasons for the

³⁴ Ibid., 39.

³⁵ José Eleuterio González, "Lecciones Orales de la Historia de Nuevo León," (Monterrey, Mexico: Imprenta del Gobierno, 1887).

³⁶ Hill, *José de Escandón*, 66.

³⁷ Ibid., 72n10.

discontentment among the colonists with regard to the conditions of the newly settled frontier. For example, he illustrates the relationship between Escandón and the leaders of the colonists of the failed Vedoya settlement who were obliged under contract to pay for the relocation expenses of their settlers. These individuals were also unhappy due to suffering continued attacks by the Janambre natives. Hill explains that Escandón had no intention of releasing the parties from their contracts, as he was unhappy with desertion among settlers.³⁸

In his work, Hill also examines the state of the province in 1757, relying largely on the inspection of the area conducted under José Tienda de Cuervo, the *juez* inspector of the colony of Nuevo Santander. In this section, he details Tienda de Cuervo's recommendations for the future of the colony based on the current state of affairs in the province and the progress that had been made since 1747. Of special concern was the establishment of a port on the Bay of Santander as there had been little progress in its development.³⁹ With respect to the economic status of the province, Tienda de Cuervo found the border settlements were profiting from the establishment of Santander, but that a good deal of hardship was felt in the new colony itself.⁴⁰ Summarizing Tienda de Cuervo's findings, Hill concludes that development in Santander occurred at a rapid rate, and notes, "the future seemed to hold great possibilities in ranching," something I will explore in Chapter VI.⁴¹

³⁸ Ibid., 93-94.

³⁹ Ibid., 110.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 112.

⁴¹ Ibid., 139.

Demonstrating Escandón's importance, Hill notes, "although the entire colonization of Nuevo Santander was not complete by 1757, the epoch of founding settlements was called to an end. Escandón and his followers had thus filled the gap between Tampico and Matagorda Bay in what was an important start in the Spanish colonization of North America."⁴² Hill's study was important in laying the foundation for future English-speaking scholars who would study Escandón.

In 1980, Hubert J. Miller produced a new English-language work on Escandón.⁴³ Miller relies primarily on Hill and other secondary sources in both English and Spanish, and summarizes activity in the northern frontier of New Spain in the years leading up to the exploration of the *Seno Mexicano* led by Escandón in 1747. He focuses on the native tribes in the region and the special problems they presented for the Spanish colonial administration. He provides an overview of Escandón's career and explains how his experience in the Sierra Gorda prepared him for his exploratory activities in the *Seno Mexicano*. Miller's work is the first English-language piece since Hill's 1926 work to bring attention to José de Escandón, and to demonstrate his importance for the history of New Spain and Spanish Texas.

As demonstrated by the number of publications focusing on Escandón, English-speaking scholars have virtually excluded Escandón and his activities in the *Seno Mexicano* from the historical record pertaining to northern New Spain. Some English-speaking scholars have incorporated Escandón and his activities in their studies on

⁴² Ibid., 140.

⁴³ Hubert J. Miller, *José de Escandón: Colonizer of Nuevo Santander* (Edinburg: New Santander Press, 1980).

related topics, however Hill and Miller's works remain as the only two focusing solely on Escandón.⁴⁴ Spanish-speaking scholars have put forth a better effort; however, they too have been accused of marginalizing the area and its history and Escandón's activities therein.⁴⁵

One of the most well-known works on Escandón in Spanish is Patricia Osante's *Orígenes del Nuevo Santander, 1748-72*.⁴⁶ In this work, Osante presents an examination of the colonization of Nuevo Santander under Escandón's direction. Osante's exhaustive research in Mexican archives provides the foundation for her study. She examines the history of the surrounding region and the state of the *Seno Mexicano* prior to Escandón's entry, describing the geography and indigenous tribes. Osante offers a comprehensive examination of the development of the surrounding provinces and demonstrates how this development contributed to the settlement of Nuevo Santander, not only by providing the colonists themselves, but also by providing their skills for ranching, farming, and mining.

Laying the foundation for future works in which she examines criminal allegations and grievances levied against Escandón by residents of Nuevo Santander in

⁴⁴ Cf. Armando Alonzo, "A History of Ranching in Nuevo Santander's Villas del Norte, 1730s to 1848" in Richmond F. Brown, ed. *Coastal Encounters: The Transformation of the Gulf South in the Eighteenth Century* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2007); Armando Alonzo, *Tejano Legacy: Rancheros and Settlers in South Texas, 1734-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998); Herbert E. Bolton and Thomas Maitland Marshall, *The Colonization of North America 1492-1783* (New York: Macmillian Company, 1936); Herbert E. Bolton, *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century: Studies in Spanish Colonial History and Administration* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970); and Carlos E. Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas: 1519-1936*, 7 volumes, II (Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones, 1936), among others.

⁴⁵ Edgar Omar Gutiérrez, "Review of Patricia Osante's *Testimonio Acerca de la Causa Formada en la Colonia del Nuevo Santander al Coronel don José de Escandón: Estudio Preliminar, Transcripción y Notas* in *Estudios de Historia Novohispana*, 23 (2000), 199-201.

⁴⁶ Patricia Osante, *Orígenes del Nuevo Santander, 1748-1772* (Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de México, 1997).

later decades, Osante explores the distribution of land, interregional commerce, and the conflicts that developed in the region. She studies the political, social, and economic crises that emerged in Nuevo Santander and demonstrates the social control Escandón exerted over the residents and their plight under his administration. She concludes that Escandón served as the principal promoter of the settlement of Nuevo Santander, and that under his direction, a group of power holders emerged that would in turn exploit the lower-class colonists and indigenous residents by taking advantage of the profitability of ranching that the land offered.⁴⁷

In her second work, Osante presents a study on the charges of bad administration levied against Escandón in 1773-74.⁴⁸ In this work, she presents a transcription of reports covering the complaints and charges against him. Osante examines the adverse reactions that resulted in society as a result of the activities undertaken by Escandón. Among these were the settlers' problems with the administration's organization, the expansion into the newly explored territory, and the social and economic problems they were experiencing. Through this work, Osante demonstrates how the charges brought against Escandón broke the silence that surrounded the entire administrative organization.⁴⁹ In her study, she is able to examine the series of political, economic, and social events that occurred during the pacification and colonization of the colony of Nuevo Santander.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 270-272.

⁴⁸ Patricia Osante, *Testimonio Acerca de la Causa Formada en la Colonia del Nuevo Santander al Coronel don José de Escandón: Estudio Preliminar, Transcripción y Notas*, (Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de México, 2000).

⁴⁹ Ibid., vi.

According to Osante, one of the most important aspects of Escandón's administration was the power relations that developed under his regime. She argues that the colonial administration that developed under Escandón became an instrument of political control that served to protect the interests of some groups who were already in power in New Spain.⁵⁰ However, by 1766, Escandón, who had for so long enjoyed the protection of powerful vice royal functionaries found himself trapped in a web of intrigue cultivated by his principal detractors.⁵¹ One of the most important groups of these detractors was the religious, who Escandón had effectively subordinated for many years to the military power under his command in an effort to avoid sharing power with them.⁵² It is here where Osante makes great use of Hierro's diary to support her arguments regarding the religious and their criticisms of Escandón's policies.

Osante also examines the accusations raised by another group of detractors, the settlers themselves, who accused Escandón of having dominated and exploited them for his own economic interests.⁵³ These charges were not only a personal attack on Escandón and his activities, but were also aimed at the royal government's exploits that played out under his care. Through her careful examination of the manuscripts, Osante explores the power relations that developed under Escandón in Nuevo Santander, and demonstrates how these relations led to the social and economic exploitation of persons who were not in power.

⁵⁰ Ibid., xx.

⁵¹ Ibid., xxii.

⁵² Ibid., xxix.

⁵³ Ibid., xxxi.

Prior to Osante, other Spanish-speaking scholars also studied Escandón and his contributions to Nuevo Santander. In 1948, Joaquín Meade published an article on José de Escandón in which he provides a thorough biographical summary, tracing his life from its inception in Spain up to his death in 1770.⁵⁴ Meade gives special attention to the founding of the villas in Nuevo Santander in this piece. He relies on primary as well as secondary sources. Although this piece adds nothing new to the body of work on Escandón, it does provide a thorough summary of Escandón's life and work. In his work, Meade does not explore negative aspects of Escandón's administration or life, and only briefly mentions the charges levied against Escandón, instead noting, "in 1776 an official declaration stated there were no charges against the Conde of Sierra Gorda."⁵⁵

In 1967, Roberto Villaseñor E. provided a transcription of a private report that Friar José Joaquín García del Santísimo Rosario made to don José de Gálvez, the Visitor General of all the tribunals of this New Spain summarizing the report Escandón made to the Junta de Guerra and Hacienda.⁵⁶ Gálvez's version is meant to serve as eyewitness testimony of the trickery and deceit with which Escandón acted and the properness with which the College of the Propaganda Fide of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de Zacatecas acted each time one of the fifteen missions was established.⁵⁷

As an introduction to this document, Villaseñor E. provides a brief synopsis of the historical background leading up to the Spanish administration's need to colonize the

⁵⁴ Joaquín Meade, "Don José de Escandón: Conde de Sierra Gorda," *Estilo: Revista de Cultura* 9 (1948), 27-38.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁵⁶ Roberto Villaseñor E., "El Coronel don José de Escandón y la Conquista del Nuevo Santander," *Boletín del Archivo General de la Nación* (México: Archivo General de la Nación, 1967) III (4), 1159-1210.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 1179.

Seno Mexicano. He explains that the threat of French encroachment into Spanish territory began as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century. He notes, “the establishment of Louisiana quickly separated Spanish Florida from the New Spanish continental dominions,” and explains how this led to New Spain needing to protect the northern frontier to protect against further French encroachment.⁵⁸

Villaseñor E. summarizes the previous proposals that Guevara, Montecuesta, and Jáuregui presented for the exploration and colonization of the region, as well as the problems associated with each plan. He explains, “in its fundamental aspects, the plan proposed by Escandón was superior to the previously submitted plans.”⁵⁹ Above all, the plan was the economically most advantageous, as it reduced costs to what was strictly necessary. Further, it allowed for the possibility of acquiring virgin lands at a very low cost.

Villaseñor E. moves to a brief biographical sketch of Escandón in which he summarizes his military and administrative career and the colonization that occurred up to 1757. He summarizes the *entrada* itself without providing additional detail.

Villaseñor E. details the series of complaints levied against Escandón who was accused of unfair distribution of lands and having chosen inappropriate places for the settlements in Nuevo Santander. In addition to complaints from the settlers, Villaseñor E. examines the conflicts between Escandón and the Franciscan friars, to whom the religious responsibilities of the newly founded provinces were entrusted. Among these were: the lack of necessary economic resources and military guards for the missions, the use of

⁵⁸ Ibid., 1162.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 1167.

parish priests in place of missionaries, and Escandón's selection of infertile locations to found the missions.⁶⁰ Villaseñor E. is careful to caution the reader not to judge Escandón as a blind and unappeasable devastator of indigenous settlements as religious minds painted him to be; instead, the reader is to understand Escandón as a "capable and even-minded organizer who . . . is responsible for the systematic development of the last unsettled territory in Spanish America."⁶¹

In 1968, Vidal Covían Martínez found that historians and biographers of Escandón had been incorrect in reporting that Escandón died in Tacubaya.⁶² He states, rather, that the death certificate shows that Escandón died on September 10, 1770, in Mexico City.⁶³ Covían Martínez provides a very brief biography on Escandón in his work. He provides a table in which he lists the twenty-three settlements founded under Escandón from 1748-1770, along with their modern-day names, and also notes, "in some cases, such as that of Laredo and those founded subsequently, Escandón did not personally found the settlement, but his captains founded them in his stead."⁶⁴

In this work Covían Martínez provides transcriptions of various documents relating to Escandón without providing additional analysis. These documents include: the will and testament of Escandón; documents dealing with his property holdings and those of his descendents from 1816-17; manuscripts documenting the settlement of villas in 1750 including detailed information on each settler, his family members, and his

⁶⁰ Ibid., 1173.

⁶¹ Ibid., 1167.

⁶² Vidal Covían Martínez, *Documentos Relacionados con el Colonizador de Tamaulipas, don Joseph de Escandón y Helguera, Conde de Sierra Gorda y Vizconde de Escandón* (Ciudad Victoria: El Archivo Histórico de la Villa de Jiménez, 1968).

⁶³ Ibid., 5.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 9.

property holdings; and a manuscript from 1751 documenting the individuals who presented themselves in Querétaro to become settlers for Nuevo Santander.

Carlos González Salas explores yet another dimension of Escandón's contributions to the development of Nuevo Santander in his work by studying Escandón's contributions to the evangelization of Nuevo Santander.⁶⁵ González Salas's primary argument is that Escandón was a successful evangelizer of the natives, and that scholars' criticisms of him have been incorrect. González Salas summarizes the history of the exploration and colonization of Nuevo Santander highlighting Escandón's dealings with the natives and the tumultuous relationship with the Franciscan Fathers during the formative period for the new province. He chronicles the founding of all the settlements in Nuevo Santander paying special attention to the plans for founding the missions for natives in the area.

González Salas speaks out against the tendency to fault Escandón for all of the failures of the missions in this region, and reminds readers that there were problems with missions and evangelizing the natives in this area prior to Escandón's entering the region, something that Escandón himself noted during his exploration of the region. Further, González Salas posits that Escandón was not the archenemy of the missions as other scholars suggest. He would rather readers know that Escandón had an expanded vision of the peaceful conquest of the natives.⁶⁶ According to González Salas, "Escandón first preoccupied himself by calling all the Indians to be reduced through the

⁶⁵ Carlos González Salas, "La Obra del Coronel Don José de Escandón en la Evangelización del Nuevo Santander," *Humánitas* [México], 19 (1977), 269-288.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 284.

proclamation of November, 1748 thereby summoning the Indians, especially the unfaithful and apostate ones, promising them forgiveness for their previous crimes, and ordering them to stop their attacks. If they did not, they would be hunted down and persecuted by fire and blood.”⁶⁷

González Salas argues that Escandón’s “methods were inclined to be moderate and peaceful and that he only used force when absolutely necessary.”⁶⁸ Escandón should be credited, he notes, “not only with laying the foundation for civil development in the modern-day state of Tamaulipas, but also for the most gigantic effort that has ever been undertaken to nurture faith in Jesus Christ in our land.”⁶⁹

In 1985, Jesús Canales Ruiz published a monograph on Escandón that is by far the most thorough of any sources documenting Escandón’s life.⁷⁰ In this work, he provides a complete historical analysis of Escandón’s life, career, and achievements in the *Seno Mexicano*. Canales Ruiz begins with an overview of previous attempts at colonization in the region prior to Escandón’s undertakings. He details Escandón’s career and also traces his descendants and their contributions to New Spain. Canales Ruiz goes beyond other scholars in his description of Escandón’s activities by providing a snapshot of the *Seno Mexicano* immediately before the exploration of 1747. He provides extensive detail on native tribes in the region, as well as the history of missionaries and their attempts at evangelization in the region prior to 1747. Canales Ruiz details the proposals of other men who vied for appointment as colonizer of the

⁶⁷ Ibid., 282.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 285.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 288.

⁷⁰ Jesús Canales Ruiz, *José de Escandón: La Sierra Gorda y el Nuevo Santander* (Santander, Spain: Institución Cultural de Cantabria, 1985).

Seno Mexicano, and explains the historical background surrounding the appointment of Escandón rather than one of the other three men who had actually presented proposals to conquer and settle the region. Surprisingly, Canales Ruiz does not spend a great deal of time examining the expedition into the *Seno Mexicano* itself. He summarizes the expedition and highlights the exceptional nature of the amount of territory covered in such a short period of time, but he does not fully explore the expedition's events. Canales Ruiz does, however, examine the settlement of each town founded in the years 1748-49, as well as those founded in later decades.

Canales Ruiz explores the difficulties Escandón faced in founding a port for the new colony, as well as detailing how property was distributed and the livestock holdings of the large haciendas that emerged in Nuevo Santander. He also chronicles the final period of Escandón's life when he came under attack for his plan and its failures, and briefly examines the court proceedings against Escandón.

Canales Ruiz's work provides an all-encompassing look at Escandón and his accomplishments in Nuevo Santander, rather than limiting his focus to either the exploration or the colonization efforts. However, he fails to incorporate Friar Hierro's diary into his analysis of the colonization of Nuevo Santander, and his work can be considered incomplete for this reason.

In the most recent work on Escandón, Jesús Mendoza Muñoz deviates from traditional studies on Escandón in which scholars study the importance of his activities,

his titles of nobility, and his positions in the political administration of New Spain.⁷¹ Instead, Mendoza Muñoz focuses primarily on Escandón's life while he lived in Querétaro, which he calls the “formative period for his future as a military leader, a nobleman, and a gentleman.”⁷² Mendoza Muñoz examines Escandón's family and private life in Querétaro where he built relationships with powerful people, strengthened his business dealings as a textile merchant and as a slave owner, and successfully climbed the ladder in terms of positions and titles that would place him firmly in the military government and public administration. Mendoza Muñoz thoroughly explores each of these important relationships that Escandón built while in Querétaro, and demonstrates how they contributed to Escandón's ability to succeed in rigid Spanish colonial society. The work is an interesting departure from other works on Escandón in which scholars focus primarily upon his activities in the *Seno Mexicano*.

In addition to works on Escandón's life and activities, a few scholars have focused their studies on the history of the development of the Mexican State of Tamaulipas in which Escandón played a central role. In one of the most widely cited of these, Gabriel Saldívar provides an exhaustive overview of the history of the State of Tamaulipas.⁷³ In this piece, he explores the geography, native tribes, and the early conquest of the region. Saldívar follows the development of the state through the War of Mexican Independence. In this general overview of the history of the State of

⁷¹ Jesús Mendoza Muñoz, *El Conde de Sierra Gorda don José de Escandón y la Helguera: Militar, Noble y Caballero* (Querétaro, Mexico: Fomento Histórico y Cultural de Cadereyta, 2005).

⁷² *Ibid.*, 10.

⁷³ Gabriel Saldívar, *Historia Compendiada de Tamaulipas* (Mexico: Archivo General de la Nación, 1945).

Tamaulipas, Saldívar does not detail the activities of the *entrada* led by Escandón, although he does highlight the historical contributions made by him.

In 1949, Alejandro Prieto revisited the history of the State of Tamaulipas in his work.⁷⁴ Prieto divides his research into two sections. In the first, he examines the history of the state by tracing its development from the pre-Hispanic era through the Mexican War of Independence. In the second half of his work, Prieto studies the geography of the state and provides extensive statistics regarding the population of the state in the various stages of its development throughout history. However, as in the case of Saldívar, Prieto glosses over details regarding the *entrada* Escandón led into the *Seno Mexicano* in 1747. Prieto's work provides an overview of the history of the State of Tamaulipas, focusing primarily on the unique geography of the region and the problems it posed for exploration and colonization efforts.

In 1973, Ernesto de la Torre Villar wrote an introduction to a reprint of Vicente de Santa María's *Relación de la Colonia del Nuevo Santander* from 1787.⁷⁵ According to De la Torre Villa, the *Relación* represents one of the most important works for the historiography of New Spain from the eighteenth century.⁷⁶ In his *Relación*, Santa María defends Escandón on various occasions. He criticizes the faults of the Spanish administration in its colonial system as well as the erroneous positions of particular *penisulares* blinded by vanity and their supposed superiority. Santa María summarizes

⁷⁴ See note 4; (reprint Mexico: Manuel Porrúa, 1975).

⁷⁵ Ernesto de la Torre Villar, ed. Introduction to *Relación Histórica de la Colonia del Nuevo Santander* (n.d., reprint, Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de Mexico, 1973).

⁷⁶ De la Torre Villar, Introduction to *Relación Histórica de la Colonia del Nuevo Santander*, 32.

Escandón's work in the *Seno Mexicano*, which, according to him, was "one of the most important for extension of the country due to its resources and strategic location."⁷⁷

Santa María discusses the problematic nature of the exploration and colonization of the *Seno Mexicano* due to its geography and hostile natives. Next, he moves to a detailed presentation of the territory and its natural resources, its geography, native tribes, and the languages they speak, their customs, dress, religion, their vices and virtues, affiliations and wars, and the relationship between Spain and the natives. Santa María chronicles the numerous intents at pacifying the region prior to Escandón's appointment, and provides a thorough analysis of the region prior to Escandón's entry. He provides an overview of the historical background for the period, in both Europe and New Spain, and the reasons for which the Spanish turned their attention and energy to expanding their control over the region.

In 1976, Juan Fidel Zorrilla published *El Poder Colonial en Nuevo Santander* in which he studies the power relations that developed under each governor of the province.⁷⁸ Zorrilla begins with a summary of the state of the region, its geography, and its inhabitants prior to Escandón's colonization of the region. He describes the nature of the colonization project, providing great detail regarding the settlers who were chosen to populate the new settlements, including their occupations, and their origins. He also discusses the missions and their state at the beginning of the colonization effort, and notes that while some natives did gather in missions, other missions were unable to be established due to desertion by the natives and lack of economic resources to effectively

⁷⁷ Ibid., 29.

⁷⁸ Juan Fidel Zorrilla, *El Poder Colonial en Nuevo Santander* (Mexico City: Manuel Porrúa, 1976).

sustain the missions. With regard to the missions, Zorrilla concludes, “overall, when taken as a whole, the failures of the mission should not be seen as so glaring due to the fact that colonization was favored over evangelization in Escandón’s plan.”⁷⁹

Zorrilla briefly discusses the exploration of the region itself, and quickly moves to the colonization that took place in the years 1748-49. Citing Gabriel Saldívar’s *Historia Compendiada*, Zorrilla presents a biographical sketch of José de Escandón and highlights his career as a textile merchant and the relationships he built with powerful members of the Spanish elite through that position.⁸⁰

Previous scholars have focused on various aspects of Escandón and the history of Nuevo Santander, but none fully incorporate all primary Spanish manuscript into their studies, as I will in Chapters IV and V. Before providing the annotated translation of Escandón’s *Informe* and the account of the preliminary colonization that is based on Escandón’s *Autos* and Friar Hierro’s diary, in Chapter III, I will provide the historical background for the exploration of the Seno Mexicano, and will explain the factors that motivated the Spaniards to preoccupy themselves with establishing their control over the region.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 43.

⁸⁰ See note 44.

CHAPTER III

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In the first part of the sixteenth century, during a period of great national prosperity and expansion, Spain had little competition from other European nations in exploring and exploiting the New World. Specifically, on the northern frontier, officials in New Spain undertook efforts to explore and extend control over previously unoccupied territories. Although there was native resistance to the Spanish presence in the northern frontier very early on, European rivals were unable to compete for control over these jurisdictions until later centuries. Spain continued to enjoy dominance in the New World for the remainder of the sixteenth century, and, by 1600, the major characteristics of Spanish dominion in the New World had fully evolved.⁸¹

In the course of the seventeenth century, however, Spanish colonial frontiers began to clash with those of France and England, resulting in a series of border struggles that spurred an international conflict for the region.⁸² Due to its inability to thwart foreign contention in the New World, Spain suffered the loss of Jamaica to England in 1655, and the contraction of the Florida frontier through the founding of Virginia and the Carolinas shortly thereafter.⁸³ By the end of the 17th century, Spain was in an unfavorable position to contest the Atlantic Coast with England and other powers.⁸⁴ In

⁸¹ J. Leitch Wright, Jr., *Anglo-Spanish Rivalry in North America* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1971), 8-10.

⁸² Herbert E. Bolton, *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century: Studies in Spanish Colonial History and Administration* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970), 103.

⁸³ Herbert E. Bolton and Thomas Maitland Marshall, *The Colonization of North America 1492-1783* (New York: Macmillian Company, 1936), 234.

⁸⁴ Wright, *Anglo-Spanish Rivalry*, 46-47.

addition, of specific interest for this project, Spain was never able to fully secure the northern frontier in the New World.⁸⁵ As a result, this region became a safe haven for rebellious indigenous populations who fled Spanish domination, as well as a region coveted by other European powers who sought to expand their colonial possessions.

In order to fully understand the history that emerged in the New World, and the transition from the era of Spanish dominance to one of international rivalry in the New World, one must first look to events in the Old World. Upon the death of Philip IV in 1665, the incompetent Charles II assumed the throne of Spain. Fearing that Spain would pass under French control, thereby upsetting the balance of power in Europe, William III of England sought to check French power with the second Treaty of Partition whereby the Austrian Archduke Charles was to inherit the crown of Spain upon Charles II's death. However, when Charles II died in 1700, he had designated Philip V, a grandson of Louis XIV, as his heir. As a result of this and the occupation of the Spanish Netherlands by French troops, officials in England decided that war was necessary.⁸⁶ The resulting war, known as the War of Spanish Succession, lasted fifteen years.⁸⁷

The War of Spanish Succession ended with the Peace of Utrecht, the name given to the series of agreements drawn up by the various powers.⁸⁸ According to Savelle, "the Peace of Utrecht was one of the great milestones in the international history of the

⁸⁵ T. H. Breen and Timothy Hall, *Colonial America in an Atlantic World* (New York: Pearson, 2004), 256.

⁸⁶ Bolton and Marshall, *The Colonization of North America*, 267.

⁸⁷ Jaime E. Rodríguez, *The Emergence of Spanish America* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1980), 2.

⁸⁸ Bolton and Marshall, *The Colonization of North America*, 273.

American hemisphere.”⁸⁹ As a result of the Treaty, Spain was forced to cede Minorca and Gibraltar to Great Britain, the Spanish Netherlands, Naples, Milan, and Sardinia to the Austrian Hapsburgs, and Sicily and parts of the Milanese to Savor.⁹⁰ Further, although Spain remained in possession of its American empire in much the same form as it had since the initial conquest, other colonizing powers, including England, France, and Holland, had occupied parts of the hemisphere for themselves.⁹¹ Spanish colonial officials now became increasingly concerned with protecting the northern frontier of New Spain, the one area left unprotected due to its geographic isolation and under-population by Spanish subjects.

While Philip V’s assumption of the Spanish throne led to great territorial loss, the Spanish empire in Europe had been in decline for some time. Philip V, the first Bourbon, sought to reverse this decline with a series of reforms that have become known as the Bourbon Reforms. Once in power, Philip V immediately began to initiate a series of changes designed to centralize Spanish government, restore finances, and reorganize the armed forces.⁹² According to Rodríguez, “the most important transformation was the establishment of the intendency system of administration by which an individual directly responsible to the king had military, financial, economic, and judicial authority.”⁹³ This process of centralization was intended to reduce regionalism and strengthen the national

⁸⁹ Max Savelle, *Empires to Nations: Expansion in America, 1713-1824* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1974), 10.

⁹⁰ Will Durant and Ariel Durant, *The Age of Louis XIV: A History of European Civilization in the Period of Pascal, Molière, Cromwell, Milton, Peter the Great, Newton and Spinoza, 1648-1715* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963), 715.

⁹¹ Savelle, *Empires to Nations*, 10-11.

⁹² Henry Kamen, *The War of Succession in Spain, 1700-1715* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969), 114.

⁹³ Rodríguez, *The Emergence of Spanish America*, 2.

government.⁹⁴ The Bourbon reforms played a significant role in much of the economic growth that occurred in the second half of the eighteenth century, as will be discussed below.⁹⁵

Another aspect of the Peace of Utrecht that impacted both Europe and the New World was Spain's agreement of the *Asiento*, which allowed the English to bring Negro slaves into the Spanish possessions and to send an annual 500 tons of goods to Spanish ports. Although this was a definitive blow to Spain's commercial independence, English merchants were unsatisfied with these concessions, and smuggling increased.⁹⁶ English smuggling contributed to increased tensions among the nations at home in Europe, and it also fed Spain's fear of foreign encroachment into their claims in the New World. The conflict over commercial and colonial interests, coupled with the ambition of Spanish rulers, resulted in strained relations between England and Spain from 1715 to 1739.⁹⁷

In an effort to decrease English smuggling, Spanish coast guard ships seized many of the English traders, whom Spanish officials treated harshly. Reports of this harsh treatment led to anger in England, and during 1738-1739, public opinion became increasingly inflamed against Spain.⁹⁸ One specific case of Spanish brutality against English merchants involved a man named Thomas Jenkins, whose ears were cut off by a Spanish official. As a result of this incident, and the continuance of Spain's selfish

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Armando Alonzo, "A History of Ranching in Nuevo Santander's Villas del Norte, 1730s to 1848" in Richmond F. Brown, ed. *Coastal Encounters: The Transformation of the Gulf South in the Eighteenth Century* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2007), 189-90.

⁹⁶ Bolton and Marshall., *The Colonization of North America*, 289.

⁹⁷ Ibid, 359.

⁹⁸ Ibid, 361.

policies, The War of Jenkins' Ear broke out between England and Spain in 1739.⁹⁹ Events in Europe caused France to enter the war on the side of the Spanish in 1740.¹⁰⁰ By 1743, the conflict that had been waged between England and Spain since 1739 developed into a great European war known as King George's War.¹⁰¹ Spain's involvement in this war further prevented it from deploying the human and economic resources needed to secure the northern frontier in order to assert control over rebellious natives who had taken refuge there, and to prevent foreign encroachment into the region.

Although France had entered the war as Spain's ally, relations between the two powers were without conflict, and Spain continually protested French intrusion into its territories in the New World. On more than one occasion, the Council of the Indies brought the danger of allowing the French occupation of Louisiana to continue to the king's attention. However, due to its own helplessness and dependence upon her ally in King George's War, Spain was forced to tolerate what was regarded as "a usurpation of her territory by France."¹⁰²

Events and issues in New Spain also led colonial officials to decide to strengthen their tenuous hold on the northern frontier. Areas adjacent to the *Seno Mexicano* had continued to develop since Cortés' initial conquest; however, beyond Cerralvo and

⁹⁹ H.W.V Temperely, "The Causes of the War of Jenkin's Ear" in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 3rd series, vol. 3, London: Royal Historical Society, 1909, 197).

¹⁰⁰ Bolton and Marshall, *The Colonization of North America*, 364.

¹⁰¹ Howard M. Chapin, *Privateering in King George's War, 1739-48* (Providence: E. A. Johnson Co., 1928), 5.

¹⁰² Charmion Clair Shelby, *International Rivalry in Northeastern New Spain, 1700-1725* (Austin: University of Texas –PhD Dissertation, 1935), 235.

Monterrey in Nuevo León, settlements were little extended.¹⁰³ In fact, for nearly a century, the northeastern outpost on the lower Río Grande frontier was Cerralvo founded in the late sixteenth century.¹⁰⁴

Explorations beyond the Nuevo León frontier had been made on a small scale in all directions by the middle of the seventeenth century, but these did not result in permanent occupation of the region. In 1655, Fernando de Azcúe led soldiers from Saltillo to Monterrey across the Río Grande against the Cacaxtle tribe. According to Bolton, this is the first expedition to cross the lower Río Grande from the south of which we have any definitive record.¹⁰⁵ To the southwest of the *Seno Mexicano*, the territory of Coahuila experienced considerable growth in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.¹⁰⁶ Also, by the end of the seventeenth century, Sinaloa on the western border of Nueva Vizcaya had passed beyond the frontier stage.¹⁰⁷ On the northwestern side of the *Seno Mexicano*, as the Chichimec war came to an end in 1589-90, Spanish prospectors and missionaries began to probe northward, and by 1598, they had gone as far as the upper Río Grande in modern-day New Mexico.¹⁰⁸ Although there had been definite progress eastward from New Mexico during the first three-fourths of the seventeenth century, and considerable contact between that province and what is now the western half of Texas, from Nuevo León, on the natural line of advance from Mexico to

¹⁰³ Bolton, *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*, 288; Peter Gerhard, *The North Frontier of New Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 362-63.

¹⁰⁴ Bolton and Marshall, *The Colonization of North America*, 247.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 248.

¹⁰⁶ Vito Alessio Robles, *Coahuila y Texas en la Época Colonial* (Mexico City, Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1978), 4.

¹⁰⁷ Bolton and Marshall, *The Colonization of North America*, 240.

¹⁰⁸ Gerhard, *The North Frontier of New Spain*, 7.

Texas, progress was slow, chiefly due to troubles with the natives who inhabited the region.¹⁰⁹ In the most extreme of these instances, known as the Pueblo Revolt, the Pueblos drove the Spaniards from New Mexico above El Paso, and killed more than 400 Spaniards.¹¹⁰

Beyond the *Seno Mexicano*, Texas had been temporarily occupied as early as 1687 as a means to prevent the French from intruding in the region.¹¹¹ However, due to its geographic isolation, the post established there in 1690 was abandoned in 1693, and Texas was unprotected for the next quarter century.¹¹² While Texas was unoccupied by Spaniards for more than two decades (1694-1715), it was not entirely forgotten or unvisited. It especially remained on the mind of Padre Francisco Hidalgo, who made unfinished work among the Tejas natives a consuming passion.¹¹³ According to Chipman, “the mission effort in East Texas had familiarized Spaniards with the geography and natives of Texas and convinced both church and government officials that future missions must be sustained by presidios and civilian settlements.”¹¹⁴ This, coupled with intelligence reports of new French activity in the region sparked renewed interest on the part of the Spanish officials.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁹ Bolton and Marshall, *The Colonization of North America*, 247.

¹¹⁰ David J. Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 135.

¹¹¹ Alejandro Prieto, *Historia, Geografía y Estadística del Estado de Tamaulipas* (Mexico City: Manuel Porrúa, 1949), 97.

¹¹² Gerhard, *The North Frontier of New Spain*, 337.

¹¹³ Donald E. Chipman, “Spanish Texas,” in Ron Tyler, Douglas E. Barnett, Roy R. Barkley, Penelope C. Anderson, and Mark F. Odintz (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas* (6 vols.; Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996), VI, 17.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ John Francis Bannon, *The Spanish Borderlands Frontier, 1513-1821* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997), 108.

In 1714, rumors of new French intrusion into the area reached Mexico City, and in a *junta de guerra* held on August 22, 1715, Spanish officials decided to reoccupy Texas.¹¹⁶ By 1716, eastern Texas had been reoccupied, but the outposts there were weak and isolated. While the Spanish were busy with the efforts to protect Texas from French incursion, in January 1719, as a result of European complications, France declared war on Spain.¹¹⁷ Upon receiving word of this news, six French soldiers from Natchitoches were able to capture the Los Adaes Mission, causing the Spanish priests and soldiers to retreat to San Antonio, leaving the area unoccupied by Spain for more than two years.¹¹⁸ The outbreak of hostilities with Spain in 1719 afforded France an opportunity to attempt to extend the territory of Louisiana, further exacerbating Spanish concern with foreign encroachment on the northern frontier.¹¹⁹ By 1722, the hopes for the speedy development of Texas had faded. Lack of support from Mexico, incompetence on the part of some local officials, a harassing native problem and, finally, a rigorous policy of retrenchment, caused Texas to relapse into the state of a sparsely-populated frontier military province.¹²⁰

By the middle of the eighteenth century, permanent settlements had been established in Nuevo León, Coahuila, Nueva Vizcaya, New Mexico, and Texas. However, along the Gulf coast from the Pánuco River up to the Guadalupe River, an area extending inland for a distance of from one hundred to one hundred and fifty miles,

¹¹⁶ Robert S. Weddle, *San Juan Bautista: Gateway to Spanish Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968), 112.

¹¹⁷ Bolton and Marshall, *The Colonization of North America*, 294.

¹¹⁸ H. Sophie Burton and F. Todd Smith, *Colonial Natchitoches: A Creole Community on the Louisiana-Texas Frontier* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008), 9.

¹¹⁹ Shelby, *International Rivalry in Northeastern New Spain, 1700-1725*, 236.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 226.

there remained a vast area yet occupied.¹²¹ Spanish colonial officials were particularly concerned with the danger in the Gulf of Mexico posed by Spain's European rivals, specifically by France. Royal authorities proposed to resolve the dual problems of defending the region and under-population in the northern frontier by applying a new family colonizing method, which would employ non-indigenous human resources that already inhabited adjoining areas.¹²² This was to be accomplished primarily by pacifying the natives of the *Seno Mexicano* and settling the region with frontiersmen from the surrounding provinces of New Spain.¹²³ This tactic would advance the Bourbon's goal of occupying the Gulf Coast rapidly and inexpensively.¹²⁴ To oversee these efforts, the Crown relied both on a well-established bureaucracy and opportunistic individuals who hoped to gain wealth and status for their services.¹²⁵ José de Escandón was one of the men chosen under this initiative.

Prior to Escandón's activities in the *Seno Mexicano*, Spaniards had attempted to establish a colony in the *Seno Mexicano*. Francisco de Garay made several fruitless attempts to establish a colony in the area from 1519-1523.¹²⁶ On the western edge of the *Seno Mexicano*, settlements were established at San Luis Potosí, Saltillo, Monterrey, and

¹²¹ Carlos E. Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas: 1519-1936*, 7 volumes, (Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones, 1936), II, 130.

¹²² Patricia Osante, "Colonization and Control: The Case of Nuevo Santander," in Jesús F. De la Teja's *Choice, Persuasion, and Coercion: Social Control on Spain's North American Frontiers* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 230.

¹²³ Armando Alonzo, *Tejano Legacy: Rancheros and Settlers in South Texas, 1734-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), 17.

¹²⁴ David J. Weber, *Bárbaros: Spaniards and Their Savages in the Age of Enlightenment* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 106.

¹²⁵ Mark A. Burkholder and Lyman L. Johnson, *Colonial Latin America* 5th edition, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) 72.

¹²⁶ Samuel Eliot Morison, *The European Discovery of America* 2 volumes, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), II, 516-518; Prieto, *Historia, Geografía y Estadística*, 12.

Cerralvo before the end of the sixteenth century, and Spanish subjects engaged in mining, ranching, and missionary work. However, little advance of settlement north of the aforementioned ones had been made since the sixteenth century.

According to Bolton, “the *Seno Mexicano*, sheltered in its southern extremity behind the Sierra Madre and the Sierra Gorda, had long been the asylum of a multitude of native bands and broken-down tribes pushed in by the northward march of the Spanish conquest, or by their more powerful Indian neighbors of the west and north.”¹²⁷ The Chicimecas or Karankawans, along with other tribes that fled during the initial conquest, found safety in the ruggedness of the Sierra Gorda and the frontier of the *Seno Mexicano*.¹²⁸ Due to the remoteness of the region and under-population by Spanish subjects, the region was considered a no man’s land and many potential colonists declined to pursue venturing into the region for this reason.

In the last decade of the sixteenth century, Franciscan missionaries began work in the Sierra Gorda, and continued it intermittently during the course of the seventeenth, but without permanent success. In the latter part of the seventeenth century, Dominican missionaries founded six missions in the district, but they were soon destroyed by the natives, who fled to the mountains, and preyed upon the frontier settlements of the Spaniards from that vantage point.¹²⁹

Unsuccessful efforts to subdue the region militarily were attempted again in the early eighteenth century. In 1714, don Francisco Barbadillo was charged with

¹²⁷ *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*, 287.

¹²⁸ Jesús Canales Ruíz, *José de Escandón: La Sierra Gorda y el Nuevo Santander* (Santander, Spain: Institución Cultural de Cantabria, 1985), 17.

¹²⁹ Bolton, *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*, 287; Gerhard, *The North Frontier of New Spain*, 363-64.

organizing military expeditions into the region in order to combat the rebellious natives, strengthen the roads, and rebuild the missions. Within a year's time these missions were burned, and Barbadillo spent the next five years attempting to subdue the natives without success.¹³⁰ The Karankawan tribes continued to remain hostile, and even after Rivera's inspection in 1727, there was little prospect of subduing them.¹³¹ The government determined that the coast lands north of Huasteca and East of Nuevo León, so long unoccupied, must be conquered and settled as a means of ending the native disturbances.¹³² According to Jones, "the whole enterprise was undertaken to counter French influence from Louisiana, to halt Indian uprisings and raids sweeping out of the Nuevo Santander region into Nuevo León, Coahuila and Texas, and finally to promote the Christianizing and civilizing of the natives."¹³³

Prior to Escandón's selection to lead the expedition to explore the *Seno Mexicano*, there was intense competition for this coveted appointment. The first of the interested parties to make a formal proposal for the conquest and settlement of the unoccupied region was don Narciso Barquín de Montecuesta, the former *Corregidor* of Santiago de los Valles. Montecuesta presented his plan to the viceroy in 1736 and detailed his plan to recruit settlers by offering them free lands and part of their expenses

¹³⁰ Toribio de la Torre, *Historia General de Tamaulipas* (Tamaulipas: Universidad Autónoma de Tamaulipas, 1986), 54.

¹³¹ Bolton, *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*, 286.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 288-89.

¹³³ Oakah L. Jones, *Los Paisanos: Spanish Settlers on the Northern Frontier of New Spain* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 65.

for the occupation of this area. He proposed establishing a fort in the region to protect the new territory and to safeguard the missionaries.¹³⁴

At almost the same time, don Joseph Fernández de Jáuregui, the Governor of Nuevo León, made a similar proposal to the viceroy.¹³⁵ He had just returned from Texas after having successfully remedied problems there, and proposed to enter the land, to reduce the natives to mission life, and to establish settlements in the region with families from Nuevo León.¹³⁶ Jáuregui pointed out the potential danger that this region faced from foreign nations being able to invade it from the sea. He also noted the importance of native assistance in order for Spanish plans for dominance in the region to have a positive outcome.¹³⁷

Over a two-year period, the viceroy and his advisers considered the plans presented to them. In 1738, a third man, don Antonio Ladrón de Guevara, a resident of Nuevo León, presented his plan and entered the contest.¹³⁸ Ladrón de Guevara conducted several expeditions into the *Seno Mexicano* from 1734 to 1735, and lived among the natives. He chronicled his exploration and later wrote an account of his activities in 1739, documenting the ranches, settlements, missions, and native tribes on the northern frontier.¹³⁹ He claimed that he not only knew the region, but was also loved and accepted by the natives who lived there, and proposed that he was uniquely

¹³⁴ Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, II, 132.

¹³⁵ Prieto, *Historia, Geografía y Estadística*, 104.

¹³⁶ Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, II, 132.

¹³⁷ Prieto, *Historia, Geografía y Estadística*, 104-105.

¹³⁸ José E. González, *Colección de Noticias y Documentos para la Historia del Estado de N. León: Corregidos y Ordenados de Manera que Formen una Relación Seguida* (Monterrey: Tip. de A. Mier, 1867), 58.

¹³⁹ Antonio Ladrón de Guevara, *Noticias de los Poblados del Nuevo Reyno de León, 1739* (Monterrey: Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios de Monterrey, 1969).

qualified to carry out the reduction and pacification in that region.¹⁴⁰ Ladrón de Guevara noted the value of the rich silver deposits and productive *salinas*¹⁴¹ known to exist in the area, and offered to occupy it practically without expense to the royal treasury.¹⁴² He proposed to populate the region's newly founded towns with residents from Nuevo Leon.¹⁴³ As compensation for relocating, these colonists would be offered free lands, as well as the privileges of first settlers, and payment for part of their costs for relocation. Ladrón de Guevara proposed to extend the *congrega* system, which was a virtual enslavement of the natives, as further enticement for colonists to relocate to the newly explored territory.¹⁴⁴

According to Castañeda, “although Ladrón de Guevara’s plan offered the greatest advantages with the least expense, it is to the credit of the judicious and Christian-minded don Juan Rodríguez de Albuérne, the Marquis de Altamira, that the proposal was refused on the grounds of Ladrón de Guevara’s intention of introducing the *congrega* system in the new territory.”¹⁴⁵ Undeterred by the rejection of his plan, Ladrón de Guevara went to Spain and personally presented his plan to the Council of the Indies and to the king. Although the Council endorsed his plan, they did not recommend its unconditional approval. Instead, they referred the issue to the viceroy and his advisors,

¹⁴⁰ Prieto, *Historia, Geografía y Estadística*, 103.

¹⁴¹ This term means salt deposits.

¹⁴² Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, II, 132.

¹⁴³ Prieto, *Historia, Geografía y Estadística*, 103.

¹⁴⁴ Vicente de Santa María, *Relación Histórica de la Colonia del Nuevo Santander* (Mexico: n.p.), Introduction by Ernesto de la Torre Villar, ed. (n.d., reprint, Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de Mexico, 1973), 170.

¹⁴⁵ Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, II, 133.

who were believed to be more informed of conditions in New Spain.¹⁴⁶ The recommendations were incorporated in full in the royal *cédula* of July 10, 1739, in which the king declared that in spirit all the plans submitted and their relative merits were one in the same, but that Ladrón de Guevara's plan seemed to involve the least cost to the crown, for which reason he particularly recommended it.¹⁴⁷

This royal order did not reach Mexico until June 6, 1740. Discouraged by the king's preference for Ladrón de Guevara's plan, the other two men withdrew their petitions, leaving the field to their successful rival. However, the viceroy refused to be hurried on the matter and went about the investigation of the plans with his accustomed thoroughness and deliberation.¹⁴⁸ Impatient with the delay, Ladrón de Guevara resorted to an ingenious attempt to impress the officials of New Spain. He brought a number of native chiefs to whom he gave military rank to Mexico City, and had them testify before the *Junta de Guerra*, which was called to consider his plans. These natives testified that they were his friends and they wanted the Spaniards to come and live among them, and that they would welcome the missionaries to instruct them in their faith.¹⁴⁹ According to Castañeda, the ruse might have proved successful had it not been for the Marquis de Altamira, the most influential and best informed advisor of the viceroy on matters pertaining to the northern frontier.¹⁵⁰ From the beginning he had sensed Ladrón de Guevara's determination to extend the *congrega* system into the new lands. The *congrega* system was nothing short of slavery, and it had proved disastrous in Nuevo

¹⁴⁶ Santa María, *Relación Histórica*, 171.

¹⁴⁷ Royal Cédula of July 1739, Archivo General de la Nación, Provincias Internas, vol. 174, folio 8.

¹⁴⁸ Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, II, 135.

¹⁴⁹ Santa María, *Relación Histórica*, 173.

¹⁵⁰ Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, II, 135.

León. Furthermore, it was philosophically contrary to every dictate of humanity and every principle of Christianity.¹⁵¹

The Marquis de Altamira recommended that Ladrón de Guevara's plan be rejected because its main purpose was to reduce to slavery the natives who had escaped from Nuevo León into the last haven of freedom left to them.¹⁵² He also brought forth evidence to show Ladrón de Guevara was a cruel and unscrupulous man, who had boasted on many occasions of the number of illegitimate children he had in every native village he had visited.¹⁵³

Ladrón de Guevara was incensed not only at the failure of his scheme, but at the disclosure of his true character; he wrote a report to the king on July 18, 1742 complaining that the viceroy and his officials had not heeded the king's wishes and he requested that the king now order the viceroy to give him authority as colonizer to enter upon the conquest and settlement of the new lands.¹⁵⁴ In response to this, the king issued a new royal *cédula* on June 13, 1743 declaring Ladrón de Guevara had no grounds to complain against the viceroy and the *Junta*, because full discretion to act had been granted to those individuals in the matter. The *Junta* was instructed to continue their investigations and to select a leader to undertake the occupation of the proposed territory at the earliest possible moment. In the meantime, Ladrón de Guevara was not

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ González, *Colección de Noticias y Documentos*, 60.

¹⁵⁴ Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, II, 136.

to interfere in any manner, nor was he to communicate with the natives who were to be reduced.¹⁵⁵

Seven years after the first royal order, in 1747, that the *Junta* in Mexico finally made its choice for the exploration and colonization of the *Seno Mexicano*.¹⁵⁶ During this time, Escandón, who had been busy subduing rebellious natives in the Sierra Gorda, had established himself as the obvious choice for the job.¹⁵⁷ Not only had he effectively carried out expeditions in the region, but he had done this at his own expense, thereby alleviating strain on the already cash-strapped royal treasury. The viceroy called Escandón to Mexico and asked him to discuss his plans for pacifying the region.¹⁵⁸

Escandón convinced Spanish colonial officials not only of his ability to juggle the demands of institutional and private forces with stakes in the occupation and exploitation of the region, but also of the viability of the impresarial strategy that he planned to put into practice.¹⁵⁹ He adopted colonizing precepts recommended by Enlightenment functionaries in addition to proposing a military form of government for the entire jurisdiction and replacement of the mission-presidio system with a large civil population, to the benefit of the Spanish Crown and of colonial society in general.¹⁶⁰ Escandón's plan was superior to those previously presented, as it was much more economical due to the fact that provisions for the troops and other expenses were

¹⁵⁵ Royal Cédula, June 13, 1743, Archivo General de la Nación, Provincias Internas, vol. 174, folios 11-22.

¹⁵⁶ Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, II, 137.

¹⁵⁷ Hubert J. Miller, *José de Escandón: Colonizer of Nuevo Santander* (Edinburg: New Santander Press, 1980), 7.

¹⁵⁸ Prieto, *Historia, Geografía y Estadística*, 109.

¹⁵⁹ Osante, "Colonization and Control," 232.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

reduced to only what was absolutely necessary.¹⁶¹ On September 3, 1746, Viceroy Francisco de Güemes y Horcasitas licensed Colonel José de Escandón to explore and develop plans for colonization of the *Seno Mexicano*.¹⁶²

Before moving to the exploration of the *Seno Mexicano* conducted under Escandón, a biographical sketch is necessary. José de Escandón was born into a prominent Spanish family in Soto la Marina on the northern coast of Spain on May 19, 1700.¹⁶³ He arrived in Mérida, México at the age of fifteen and served as a cadet in the Compañía de Caballeros Montados Encomenderos de la Ciudad de Mérida until twenty-one years of age.¹⁶⁴ Of this experience, Escandón writes, “I first served Your Majesty in the Company of Compañía de Cabelleros Montados Encomenderos in the City of Mérida at my own cost as a volunteer and adventurer in 1715.”¹⁶⁵ When the English filibusters began to seriously threaten the ports of Veracruz and Campeche, Escandón stood out in his efforts to drive them out and was promoted to lieutenant.¹⁶⁶ He effectively thwarted the English threat at his own cost and without any cost to the Royal Hacienda.¹⁶⁷ This action, combined with his previous military service, would open a new path for Escandón. In 1721, he was transferred to the *Compañía de la Militia Urbana*, a post that

¹⁶¹ “Instrucción del Conde de Revillagigedo al Marqués de las Amarillas Sobre lo Ocurrido en el Nuevo Santander y su Pacificación por el Conde de Sierra Gorda.” in *Instrucciones que los Vireyes de Nueva España Dejaron a sus Sucesores. Añadense Algunas que los Mismos Trajeron a la Corte y otros Documentos Semejantes a las Instrucciones* (Mexico: Imprenta Imperial, 1867), 37.

¹⁶² Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, II, 154.

¹⁶³ Jesús Canales Ruíz, *José de Escandón: La Sierra Gorda y el Nuevo Santander* (Santander, Spain: Institución Cultural de Cantabria, 1985), 39.

¹⁶⁴ Gabriel Saldívar, *Historia Compendiada de Tamaulipas* (Mexico: Archivo General de la Nación, 1945), 78.

¹⁶⁵ José de Escandón, Informe al Virrey (Archivo General de Indias, Audiencia de México), 690A, folio 910.

¹⁶⁶ Villaseñor E., “El Coronel don José de Escandón,” 1168.

¹⁶⁷ Canales Ruíz, *José de Escandón*, 52.

would provide him magnificent opportunities to demonstrate his military prowess and distinguish himself as a man with special talents with the native population.¹⁶⁸

In 1727, Escandón subdued a native uprising at Celaya and was promoted to the rank of *Sargento Mayor* for his services a year later.¹⁶⁹ He continued to gain military fame for dealing with the native uprisings in Guanajuato, Irapuato, and San Miguel during the years 1732-1740, and was promoted to Colonel of the Regiment of Querétaro in 1740.¹⁷⁰ The following year Escandón was appointed Lieutenant General of the Sierra Gorda district. In this new position he conducted four expeditions into the Sierra Gorda district without any cost to the royal treasury. According to Miller, these expeditions provided him valuable knowledge of the region, which would prove important in his later expeditions in the *Seno Mexicano*.¹⁷¹

The social and economic benefits of Escandón's marriages paralleled his successful military career. His marriages to daughters of prominent social figures helped solidify his position in the government of New Spain. On December 9, 1724, Escandón married his first wife, doña María Antonio Ocio y Ocampo.¹⁷² She was the owner of a mill, an industry with plentiful benefits.¹⁷³ Doña María died after twelve years of marriage, and on January 13, 1737, Escandón married his second wife, doña María

¹⁶⁸ Saldívar, *Historia Compendiada de Tamaulipas*, 78.

¹⁶⁹ Canales Ruíz, *José de Escandón*, 51.

¹⁷⁰ Saldívar, *Historia Compendiada de Tamaulipas*, 79.

¹⁷¹ *José de Escandón*, 5)

¹⁷² Juan Fidel Zorrilla, *El Poder Colonial en Nuevo Santander* (Mexico City: Manuel Porrúa, 1976), 80.

¹⁷³ Canales Ruíz, *José de Escandón*, 51.

Josefa Juana de Llera y Bayas.¹⁷⁴ She was the daughter of the *Regidor* of Querétaro.¹⁷⁵

Both these marriages provided Escandón with important socio-political associations that were crucial in his ability to climb the ladder in terms of positions and titles that would place him firmly in the military government and public administration in New Spain.¹⁷⁶

Escandón would later employ tactics he learned in his business dealings while in Querétaro in the execution of his plans for colonization of Nuevo Santander.

In 1747, Escandón departed for that unexplored region, and proceeded to “thoroughly and completely explore, survey, and map the virgin area of 12,000 squares miles, inhabited by apostates and barbarous Indians, who had resisted all previous Spanish efforts to subdue them.”¹⁷⁷ Let us now turn to the events that unfolded in the early months of 1747.

¹⁷⁴ Jesús Mendoza Muñoz, *El Conde de Sierra Gorda don José de Escandón y la Helguera: Militar, Noble y Caballero* (Querétaro, Mexico: Fomento Histórico y Cultural de Cadereyta, 2005), 41-42.

¹⁷⁵ Canales Ruíz, *José de Escandón*, 48.

¹⁷⁶ Mendoza Muñoz, *El Conde de Sierra Gorda*, 39.

¹⁷⁷ Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, II, 142.

CHAPTER IV

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION OF ESCANDÓN'S *INFORME*

By late 1746, José de Escandón had established himself as the best suited individual for undertaking the exploration of the *Seno Mexicano* due to his experience subduing native uprisings in the *Sierra Gorda* district, and leading multiple expeditions into neighboring regions. After his appointment on September 3, 1746, Escandón spent the next several months preparing for the exploration of the *Seno Mexicano*.¹⁷⁸ He recruited individuals who he felt were well suited to serve as military captains in his campaign due to their previous experience living on the northern frontier and their extensive military leadership experience in neighboring provinces of the *Seno Mexicano*.¹⁷⁹ The entire expeditionary force under Escandón's command was comprised of seven captains. These included: Antonio Ladrón de Guevara, Francisco de Sosa, Francisco de Barberena, Felipe de Apressa y Moctezuma, Blas María de la Garza Falcón, Miguel de la Garza Falcón, and Joaquín de Orobio y Bazterra.

The selection of Antonio Ladrón de Guevara is particularly interesting because of his prior competition with Escandón for the title of explorer of the *Seno Mexicano*. Although Ladrón de Guevara was discredited in possessing the necessary qualifications for the primary position, Escandón recognized his experience in exploring the

¹⁷⁸ Carlos E. Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas: 1519-1936*, 7 volumes, (Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones, 1936), II, 154.

¹⁷⁹ Readers should not that Escandón refers to many captains in his Informe and Autos. He calls all individuals who led portions of the expedition or colonization effort captains, and also names a native leaders as a captain. Throughout the translations I provide in Chapters IV and V, I have faithfully translated Escandón's calling of these men as captains, even though, in some cases, such as for Francisco de Sosa, these men did not retain the title of captain beyond their service under Escandón.

neighboring provinces of Nuevo León, Coahuila, and Texas, and his acceptance by the natives in the region. In addition, Escandón's appointment of wealthy ranchers, such as the Garza Falcón brothers, not only members of the expeditionary party, but as leaders of it, is of particular interest for the future development of Nuevo Santander. I will discuss the connection between the unique colonization plan Escandón implemented in Nuevo Santander and the development of the civilian ranching industry in Chapter VI.

Escandón's plan for exploration called for the captains to direct their men to converge simultaneously upon the *Seno Mexicano*, departing from various strategically selected departure points and to meet up approximately six weeks later, at the mouth of the Río Grande, once all exploration was completed. Each captain was responsible for exploring the course with which Escandón had charged him, and each was responsible for keeping a diary to document their trek. These men were to include descriptions of the natives, flora, fauna, rivers, mines, and *salinas* they encountered. Upon reaching the mouth of the Río Grande at the expedition's end, each captain was to hand over his diary to Escandón, who would utilize the information in order to draft his *Informe* of the expedition that he would later submit to the viceroy.

Escandón describes three separate events in his *Informe*: the preparation for the exploration, the exploration into the *Seno Mexicano*, and his colonization plan for the newly explored region. In the first six folios of the *Informe*, Escandón describes his departure from Querétaro, the staging area for the expedition. He details his trek northeastward, and notes that many individuals volunteered to accompany him on this or any other expedition that he would lead into the region. Escandón briefly describes the

provisions that he had previously ordered be gathered for this venture, including: munitions, tents, beams, axes, machetes, and everything else that was necessary to facilitate the journey through the lands, such as small wares, tobacco, and foodstuffs to give to the barbarous ones. After preparing the provisions and gathering his men, Escandón sent word to the other six captains for them to depart on January 23rd from their designated departure points.

The second event that Escandón documents in his *Informe* is the expedition into the *Seno Mexicano*. In this section, Escandón composes a report that is based on each captain's diary of their respective portion of the expedition, including his own. All of these diaries, with the exception of four folios from Captain Orobio y Bazterra's report are lost; Thus, Escandón's *Informe* serves as the only record to survive in the historical literature.¹⁸⁰ In the *Informe*, Escandón provides great detail regarding the geography, flora, and fauna of the region. He took great care in detailing available water sources and the many types of foodstuff available in the region. Escandón also documented numerous native tribes living in the newly explored region, and documented their customs, alliances, enemies, and where possible, number of families in the tribe.

The bulk of Escandón's *Informe* documents his own activities during the expedition, drawing information from the other men's reports where appropriate in his effort to convince the Spanish crown that they must take timely action in order to prevent further foreign encroachment into the region, and to quash the rebellious natives

¹⁸⁰ Captain Orobio y Bazterra's manuscript does not add additional detail to Escandón's version of events, with the exception of one substantive difference, which will be discussed in Chapter VI. See Supplemental File 4 for a transcription of these four folios from Orobio y Bazterra's diary.

who threaten Spanish dominance over the region. In one instance in which Escandón notes foreign encroachment into the region, he observed some natives dragging a pirogue, which appeared to be from a sloop, over some round post from the sea to the *lagunas*, while stopped near the Salinas de la Barra. The natives informed him that they had taken it from the French, who had been shipwrecked on that coast two years ago. They added that they had killed and eaten some of them, taking them as enemies, showing some hats and five pesos with the Mexican stamp and some other things of little value that they said they took from them.¹⁸¹

Escandón also pointed out that it would be difficult to settle the region until the rebellious natives of the region were subdued. He appealed to the king by summoning the notion of Spanish obligation to convert the natives in the name of God and to make them good Spanish subjects. By subduing the unruly natives in the region, it would be easier for Spanish settlers to move into the region in order to protect Spain's newly explored assets. The difficulty of pacifying a region where "the barbarous and apostate Indians have practiced the most atrocious crimes in it without forgiving honor, lives, or *haciendas*, by burning and destroying entire towns,"¹⁸² was one of the challenges Escandón faced in drafting his colonization plan.

Escandón reported on numerous native tribes living in the newly explored region, documenting their customs, alliances, enemies, and where possible, the number of families in the tribe. With regard to the coastal Bocas Prietas, who lived near some *lagunas*, he notes that "they travel through the majority of the *lagunas* to their islets and

¹⁸¹ José de Escandón, Informe al Virrey (AGN, PI), vol. 179, folios 145r-194r; folio 151v18-27.

¹⁸² Ibid., folios 169r27-169v1.

coast with the water at their chests or a little higher in some parts, and they provided themselves with drinking water from various small wells that they hand dug along the banks, even though it comes out salty.”¹⁸³ The Bocas Prietas was one of the most important tribes Escandón encountered during his expedition.¹⁸⁴ They were led by their captain, Santiago, and they lived on a large plateau and along its skirts near the coast. Escandón estimated that the tribe was comprised of 400 families. He reported them as being “truly barbarous. They do not have huts or any other thing to protect them from the sun or water, and that they generally walk around totally nude with the exception of the women, who use a piece of deer hide or grass to cover up. They do not grow anything; they eat what they hunt or fish, or hearts of palms and wild roots.”¹⁸⁵

With regard to their alliances and enemies, Escandón reports that “they are at continuous war with their neighboring *rancherías* to which they commit great harm. There are many apostates from the New Kingdom of Leon among them, who, having left their towns and missions, find secure cover there, and as they are skilled in entries and departures into the frontier. Accompanied by some of said Indians, they attack ranches and haciendas, performing harmful misfortunes.”¹⁸⁶ This tribe is of particular importance, because they had caused widespread fear by attacking previous unsuccessful Spanish expeditions in the area.

¹⁸³ Ibid., folio 152r16-21.

¹⁸⁴ This tribe’s captain, Santiago, spent a great deal of time with Escandón. Their relationship is something that will be fully discussed in Chapter V, as it was presented in different lights by Escandón and Friar Simón del Hierro, who accompanied Escandón during the colonization conducted in 1748-49.

¹⁸⁵ Escandón, Informe, folio 150r14-21.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., folio 150r21-29.

Escandón also provides detailed information about other, less important, in terms of their influence on the Spanish enterprise, tribes encountered in the region. For example, he notes encountering the Mecos, who lived in a *ranchería* near Tamaulipa, the one, but who posed no threat to the Spanish undertaking in the region. It should be noted in all, Escandón and the other captains cite encountering more than thirty-five different tribes during the entire expedition. Where possible, I have included notes to clarify or provide additional information regarding each of these in the annotated translation that follows.

Escandón was also concerned with completing a thorough exploration of the coast in the newly explored area. He and his captains attempted and failed numerous times to achieve this objective during the exploration of the *Seno Mexicano*. Escandón recognized the importance of exploring the region and the possibility of establishing a great port in that region. He notes that “the Bahía del Espíritu Santo . . . is deep enough for boats and similar vessels that contribute much to settlement through fishing and the transportation of woods and materials, and for the register and care of said bay.”¹⁸⁷ Of the Nuevo Santander coastline, Escandón expressed the difficulties that he encountered in attempting to breach it, and notes that “the sandbar of the Nuevo Santander estuary, is ten leagues from the one called Las Palmas. . . . This one will only be able to be passed with boats or canoes due to being wide and deep...”¹⁸⁸ Escandón lamented not being able to fully explore the coast, and noted the necessity of having a boat in order to complete the exploration.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., folio 161v21-26.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., folio 156v13-17.

Another issue that was of constant concern to Escandón and the other captains was the lack of water in the region. Captain Joaquín Orobio y Bazterra and his expeditionary party suffered greatly due to the lack of water. They attempted to travel from the Nueces River to the Río del Norte, and were advised by the natives who accompanied them that there was no fresh water available in that region. They traveled a total of forty-six leagues, and Orobio y Bazterra reported having found the natives warning of lack of water in the region to be true.¹⁸⁹ He reported “finding *lagunas* in the area, but they were completely salty, and he reported he was able to take enough fresh water for the people from some handmade wells the barbarous Indians made, and if he had not availed himself of palm roots and other fresh herbs that the country provided, his hardships would have been worse.”¹⁹⁰ Captain Miguel de la Garza Falcón reported having to alter his course due to the lack of watering holes in the area he was exploring.¹⁹¹

Throughout the *Informe*, Escandón and the other captains detail the location of places they believe would be suitable for settlement. Although his failure to found missions was a point of contention between Escandón and the religious, and would later serve as evidence against him in his failure to faithfully carry out the colonization plan in Nuevo Santander, Escandón does mention sites that would be suitable for missions. In entry 46, he notes, “there is a plain about a half a league wide to the north and another where a decent number of seeds can be planted and watered for the maintenance of the

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., folio 160v7-29.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., folio 163r18-26.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., folio 159v11-15.

mission and presidio.”¹⁹² However, he also criticizes the failings of the missions in the region. When detailing his plan for the site of the future settlement of Santa Bárbara, which is the modern-day town of Ocampo,¹⁹³ for example, he recalls:

a mission was founded by the Río Verde jurisdiction of the Province of Michoacán in this location in the month of July of the year 1617. It remained populated very few days due to not having left a religious or having placed any residents or people of reason there. Under its title, up to today’s date in the 130 years that have elapsed, the synod of 300 pesos each year has been charged for supporting the religious, as if one had been there, ... it serves only to consume the royal *hacienda* without fruit¹⁹⁴

Escandón was a vocal opponent of the manner in which the missions were currently administered in the region. Throughout his *Informe*, he references issues with the missions’ failure to fulfill their mission, due to being abandoned, and due to being an economic burden on the royal treasury.

The third item Escandón presents in his *Informe* is his colonization plan for the newly explored region, and his justification for it.¹⁹⁵ In this section, Escandón explains his decision to forego founding missions simultaneously with the civilian settlements, and details the importance of founding civilian settlements at strategic locations throughout the *Seno Mexicano* in an effort to disunite rebellious native tribes that might unite against the Spanish presence in the region. The historical importance of

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, folio 161v12-15.

¹⁹³ See Ciro R. de la Garza Treviño, *Así nació Tamaulipas: La Epopeya Escondiana* (Ciudad Victoria, Tamaulipas, 1953), 37.

¹⁹⁴ Escandón, Informe al Virrey, folio 177r8-24.

¹⁹⁵ Numbers 79-99 of the Informe detail the colonization plan, and numbers 100-114 detail the justification for it. report to the viceroy.

Escandón's exploration of the *Seno Mexicano* and his colonization plan for the newly explored Province of Nuevo Santander will be discussed in Chapter VI.

Escandón also addresses many of the problems with administration that he noticed while conducting his exploration of the region in his *Informe*. For example, he comments on the necessity of ensuring the soldiers who will be assigned to the region are treated well, noting that “the most important and principal concern to encourage the frontier soldiers, assuring them that they will be supported in the enjoyment of military privilege that they are due, and that they will be attended to correspondingly, according to the services they performed, especially in the assignment of some of the lands that will be pacified.”¹⁹⁶ Escandón also wanted to change the manner in which the soldiers were paid. He notes:

One of the main reasons for which so many internal presidios seem of little or no benefit to me is due to the way in which the majority of captains pay the soldiers. The soldiers assure me they charge them through titles of collection and transportation, and they are accustomed to taking a third of their salaries from them, and sometimes the other two thirds as well. They usually tell them they do not need the money, nor is it useful to them, and the soldiers are in such a position that rarely can they verify having received a third of the amount to which they are entitled, which Your Majesty punctually pays them.¹⁹⁷

Escandón recommended a new strategy “to remove this abuse and harmful thievery,” noting, “it will be very useful . . . if Your Excellency . . . orders each corporal and

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., folio 173r6-12.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., folio 188v15-27.

soldier be paid in cash on the table, in his own hand in the same settlement as his residence so that he can buy whatever he needs at will, and with the money remaining there, commerce will be strengthened among its settlers.¹⁹⁸ Further, Escandón believed that “having all the money at once, the assigned 225 pesos will be more appreciated than if they were 400, given the satisfaction in the way . . . they are accustomed to receiving them.”¹⁹⁹

In detailing the organization for each of the planned fourteen settlements, Escandón notes the planned location for the settlement, nearby water sources, and any other pertinent information that makes the location suitable for settlement. Next, he details the number of settlers needed, the amount of land to be distributed to each captain and settler, the number of pesos each captain and soldier should be paid, and the nearby location where the natives should be settled. For example, in entry 82, for the site of Santa María de Llera, Escandón notes that “fifty-one families of Spaniards are needed . . . giving them necessary lands and water, 200 pesos to each one at one time, and 500 to the captain . . .”²⁰⁰

Another issue Escandón noted with the current administration of neighboring regions was the crown’s payment of synods to the missions. In entry 101, he recommends that the crown cease paying eight synods from the from the Provinces of

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., folio 189r7-15.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., folio 189r15-20.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., folio 175v1-6.

Guadalajara and Zacatecas in the New Kingdom on Leon and the Province of Coahuila due to not having natives to administer in the missions. Escandón notes the economic burden to the crown, reporting that “said synods have continued unceasingly where there is no necessity for them,” and illustrates the detriment they pose to the goal of reducing the natives in the region, noting that “they make the continuation of the reduction of the Indians impossible, even if they pretend to advance it in any other way.”²⁰¹

With regard to the settlement of the natives, Escandón, recommended:

the missionary ministers that have to be put there for the religious administration should be apostolic religious men due to the good example they provide, and not requiring benefits. They do not take the Indians to the missions until they are well instructed, and once they are subjected to sociable and political life, priests can be placed there.²⁰²

This was a stark departure from the manner in which the mission system was currently operating in neighboring provinces, and when, combined with his recommendation to cease paying the synods to the missions that were, in his opinion, being funded without serving any natives, was a source of contention between him and the religious interests in the region, as will be discussed in Chapters V and VI.

Escandón provides great detail regarding the site for each settlement and the manner in which they should be organized and administered. In addition to these details,

²⁰¹ Ibid., folios 185v13-186r14.

²⁰² Ibid., folio 173v2-7.

he also provides the justification for making these changes or implementing new strategies for these settlements. He recommends “not creating new presidios because the royal *hacienda* is unable to support the growing expenses they occasion, and the surest means by populating the new region is by bringing residents, not soldiers.”²⁰³

Escandón’s *Informe* provides valuable insight into the geographical description and current state of affairs with the natives and foreign encroachers in the *Seno Mexicano* (Figure 1). Escandón documents his and the other Spaniards’ interactions with the natives who inhabited the region, and provides a first-hand look at the manner in which the Spaniards sought to exert their dominance over the natives, but were in the precarious position of being outnumbered and had to concede power in some situations in order to obtain what they desired.

In the annotated translation that follows, I have produced a somewhat modernized, literal translation. I have attempted to maintain Escandón’s style, and as a result, run on sentences, which are common in the Spanish language occur frequently, though I have taken the liberty to add punctuation when the sentences become too long or confusing. I have included Escandón’s use of parenthetical remarks in the *Informe*. I have also taken the liberty to clarify Spanish terms that are unclear.

²⁰³ Ibid., folio 174r9-14.

Escandón's Informe to the Viceroy

Very Excellent Sir,

Through a report dated of the forth of December of the most recent past year of 1746, I advised Your Excellency²⁰⁴ of the manner in which I had prepared for my departure for the discovery, pacification, and settlement of the coast of the *Seno Mexicano* that Your Excellency served himself by placing in my care. With those of the twenty-third and thirtieth of the same month, the twentieth of February, and the sixth and twentieth of April, I have better described my blessed journey and my return to this city. I also expressed that I would completely inform you and include a map as soon as I was advised of various remaining diligences for its complete exploration. I entrusted the officials, who gathered for the expedition, to execute these diligences during their return. Due to the distances being so great and the conveyance by means of trips so costly, some delay has been necessary. Finding them all under my command, I perform it, omitting to send the diaries and route diaries that were compiled so as to prevent the bulk and confusion they would cause, seeming more convenient to me to place their context in substance in the places to which they correspond. To this end, I have demarcated all that unknown territory, the junctions of the frontier provinces that surround it, and the Indians who inhabit it, and I have directed this entry only for the discovery so that Your Excellency may administer the providences that are of your superior will with certainty. For this reason I omit forming legal diligences (except in the orders that Your

²⁰⁴ Escandón is writing to Juan Francisco de Güemes y Horcasitas who served as the 41st Viceroy of New Spain from 1746-1755 during the reign of King Fernando VI. Thomas Charles Barnes, Thomas H. Naylor, and Charles W. Polzer, *Northern New Spain: A Research Guide* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1981), 95.

Excellency served himself by expending for the outcome and those that I gave in its consequences of which I remain with testimony) as much for there not having been a thing that required it, and due to the fast pace of the journey and the daily trips that seemed necessary to me, which did not leave me unoccupied for even a moment, and my principal concern being to perform the complete exploration, and to save time so the soldiers could return to their homes and the toils of the campaign could be diminished, given that they participated almost entirely at their own expense.

2. On the seventh day of January 1747, accompanied by the Reverend Father Friar Joseph Ortes de Velasco, a religious from this apostolic College of San Fernando,²⁰⁵ Commissary of the missions of the Propaganda Fide of those of this New Spain, named at my request by the sovereignty of Your Excellency by the Reverend Father Friar Lorenzo de Medina, companion of the Captain of this regiment, don Joseph Diaz Maldonado, with two sergeants, a picket of ten soldiers chosen from his company, and the corresponding servants, I departed from this city for that of San Luis Potosí, located forty leagues to the northeast for a very long journey. I found the spirits so very well disposed in it (due to some letters that I had previously written) that if I had needed 200 soldiers equipped with everything necessary, I do not doubt that they would have accompanied me with great pleasure for whatever reason, as all the residents of the frontier have a great desire to know what is in that unexplored coast. The good disposition of don Julian Corzanigo, its Second Lieutenant, Sergeant Major don

²⁰⁵ This College was founded under the direction of the College of Santa Cruz de Querétaro, the first institution for the propagation of the Catholic Faith in America. Many Franciscans who served in Texas came from this College. See Anonymous, "College of Santa Cruz de Querétaro," in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, II, 210-211.

Emeterio de la Puebla Rubin de Celiz, Captain don Joseph de Erraparaz, and all the important men in San Luis Potosí contributed a lot. Informed of the importance of the work, each aspired to take part in it, which I appreciated, thanking them correspondingly in the royal name of Your Majesty, reserving to take them up on their offer in the future, when it is time to populate the settlement, and it will be necessary.

3. The Reverend Father Friar Agustín de Jesús, a Carmelite religious from the Province of San Antonio of this New Spain, administrator of the *haciendas* that said province possesses in these frontiers as belongings of the foundation that he is completing in said city of San Luis Potosí appeared here saying he was ready to personally accompany me with forty soldiers equipped with everything necessary to begin the departure.²⁰⁶ So that he was assured that I did not disregard the offer of such generous service, I admitted him. He accompanied me until the twenty-first day of February from the Conchas River,²⁰⁷ four leagues ahead of the Salinas de la Barra,²⁰⁸ where the troops from the New Kingdom of Leon²⁰⁹ that the Sergeant Major don Antonio Ladrón de Guevara²¹⁰ commanded joined me. I informed him to return, which he did, with said forty soldiers who served faithfully in everything that occurred, for which they should later be thanked by said province, myself having done this to the expressed Reverend Father Friar

²⁰⁶ There is no indication or record of Friar Agustín de Jesús having kept a diary or having written a report during this expedition.

²⁰⁷ This river was also commonly called Río de la Concepción. Antonio Ladrón de Guevara, *Noticias de los Poblados de que Se Componen el Nuevo Reino de León, Provincia de Coahuila, Nueva-Extremadura y la de Texas*, 1739, ed. Andrés Montemayor Hernández (Monterrey, Mexico: Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey, 1696), xxi.

²⁰⁸ Salt pits.

²⁰⁹ Modern-day Mexican state of Nuevo León. Alberto Leduc, *Diccionario de Geografía, Historia y Biografía Mexicanas* (Mexico City: Imprenta C. Bouret, 1910), 696-697.

²¹⁰ Ladrón de Guevara was a citizen from Nuevo León who presented a plan for colonization of the *Seno Mexicano* in 1738. Donald E. Chipman, *Spanish Texas 1519-1821* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992), 291.

Agustín de Jesús by virtue of the order that Your Excellency served himself by bestowing upon me with the date of the twenty-fourth of February.

4. The royal Second Lieutenant of said city, don Antonio de Luna y Mora, also appeared, offering to send don Francisco de Mora, his brother, with twenty-five soldiers that he already had prepared. To this end he made a demonstration of his generous spirit and fondness for royal service, which I did not allow, due to finding myself already with excess troops, leaving him satisfied that it would be preferable in any other circumstance that presents itself in the future.

5. From the city of San Luis Potosí, I marched toward the mission of Tula,²¹¹ forty-five leagues to the northeast; in my return journey I followed the skirt of the *Sierra Gorda*.²¹² In that mission I found the Captain of Caballos Corazas,²¹³ don Antonio Fernández de Acuña, who, with his officials and 150 soldiers from his company, awaited me, prepared for the departure. Considering that some of said soldiers might be missed in their homes, I ordered said captain and officials to tell the soldiers that up to fifty of them could remain here, considering the others to be sufficient for what was going to be undertaken, with those who remained expressing they would go on another occasion, serving as security for the frontier. In the interim the rest of the company could replenish itself; but neither this diligence that was performed, nor my telling them that those who remained and those who went would be treated equally, was effective, given

²¹¹ Modern-day Tula, Tamaulipas, Mexico. Escandón founded this mission some years previous. See Robert S. Weddle, *The French Thorn: Rival Explorers in the Spanish Sea, 1682-1762* (College Station, Texas A&M Press, 1991), 265.

²¹² The large mountain range among the modern Mexican states of Guanajuato, Querétaro and San Luis Potosí. Leduc, *Diccionario*, 905.

²¹³ Lightly armored soldiers on horseback.

that everyone wanted to go, taking it as a graceless act or a discredit not going on a campaign that was so desirable. This action served me as great complacency, and I have referred it so that Your Excellency is advised of the manner in which the soldiers of that frontier behave, and deeming it necessary to leave it properly secured, I availed myself by naming twenty of the referenced soldiers, so that with a bit of satisfaction, they would remain there, which was difficult to do without displeasing them. One hundred of the soldiers of this company live in the Guadalcazar²¹⁴ jurisdiction, whose residents, by means of the Lieutenant of the Sergeant Major, don Julian de Isasi, generously provided some provisions of corn and meat that were lacking, twenty-five mules, and fifty horses that they lent them for their assistance with the transport, and I thanked them with corresponding demonstrations.

6. With 130 soldiers of the referenced company of Tula and Guadalcazar, the forty from the Reverend Father Friar Agustín de Jesús, and the picket of this regiment, I left said mission for the new settlement of Jaumave,²¹⁵ eighteen leagues away to the northeast, where I found thirty of its inhabitants prepared to accompany me. I did not permit this, considering them necessary in the settlement, as much for its security, (given that it is the last Christian settlement on that side and having some barbarous Indians nearby), as for protecting the transport of provisions if they were necessary in the future, for which reason I set aside some provisions.

²¹⁴ Modern-day northeastern part of the Mexican state San Luis Potosí. Leduc, *Diccionario*, 387.

²¹⁵ Modern-day Jaumave, Tamaulipas. Leduc, *Diccionario*, 507.

7. In this stopping place Colonel Marques del Castillo de Aisa²¹⁶ appeared, offering to personally assist with whatever was necessary for the undertaking, whose generous action well demonstrates his zeal for service of both majesties and the profitableness he considers the pacification of the Indians of that coast. Although I determined that it was not proper to allow him to depart, so as not to inconvenience him, I did permit the service of ten soldiers prepared with all necessities that he offered, and they accompanied me until the sixth day of March from the referenced Conchas River Camp, at which time I ordered them to return to their homes, considering them no longer necessary.

8. In this new settlement I also found don Philippe Tellez Girón,²¹⁷ Mayor of the town of Labradores²¹⁸ of this New Kingdom of Leon, whose governor dispatched him with ten soldiers so that he accompany me, which he faithfully performed, until the expressed sixth day of March, when on the bank of the mentioned Conchas River, I ordered him to return with them.

9. With all the provisions that I had previously ordered transported from this city and other places, aside from those that were built in that frontier, including the munitions, tents, beams, axes, machetes, and everything else that was made to facilitate the transit through lands, small wares, tobacco, and foodstuffs to give to the barbarous ones, I ordered the convoy to depart on the twenty-third day of the referenced month of January. I left that same afternoon with the referenced 190 soldiers, who, with the ten of the

²¹⁶ A wealthy hacienda owner and governor of Nuevo Leon. Weddle, *French Thorn*, 265.

²¹⁷ A resident from Mexico City. Jesús Canales Ruíz, *José de Escandón: La Sierra Gorda y El Nuevo Santander* (Santander, Spain: Institución Cultural de Cantabria, 1985), 161.

²¹⁸ This is modern-day Charcas, San Luis Potosí. Montemayor Hernández, *Noticias*, 21n.

picket of Captain Maldonado, comprised 200, except for the officials, a surgeon, the horseshoers, fifty servants of service, the muleteers, and thirty friendly Indians. We swiftly headed east until arriving at Our Lady of Guadalupe Camp, about eight leagues away from said new settlement that they call the Voca del Jaumave. There is an already voluminous river that runs to the southeast, bathing all those beautiful plains named Las Ruzias.²¹⁹

10. As I have said, the eight leagues from el Jaumave to this stopping place are the thickest or densest to encircle the *Sierra Gorda*, offering easy passage due to being of slopes, a little rocky, and with plenty of woods of pine trees, evergreen oaks, and an abundance of grasslands. Farther on it returns to being thick, and following the route to the north, it goes toward the New Kingdom of Leon, the Province of Coahuila,²²⁰ and to New Mexico.

11. Said *Sierra Gorda* ends here, and the spacious plains that run toward Tampico²²¹ in an east-north-east direction to Los Adaes²²² begin. No hill other than that of the Tamaulipa is visible. I remained two days in this stopping place, which I named Our Lady of Guadalupe, with the motive of discovering the beautiful valleys named Las Ruzias that begin there. They run to the skirt of Tamaulipa, located to the northeast towards the sea. They offer the most appreciable commodities for settlement, as much

²¹⁹ A plain extending toward the Tamaulipas range. Weddle, *French Thorn*, 265.

²²⁰ This New Spanish province was carved out of Nuevo León and Nueva Vizcaya in response to the threat of French encroachment. Vito Alessio Robles, *Coahuila y Texas en la época colonial* (Mexico City, Mexico: Editorial Cultura, 1938), 2.

²²¹ Modern-day Tampico, Tamaulipas, Mexico. Leduc, *Diccionario*, 937.

²²² Los Adaes was for more than half a century the easternmost establishment in Spanish Texas. Its primary purpose was to block French encroachment upon Spain's southwestern possessions. See James L. McCorkle, Jr., "Los Adaes," in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, IV, 292-293.

for the fertility of the land, benign temperament that it enjoys, and abundance of wood and firewood that those skirts of said land has, as for the amount of water that said voluminous river carries in it at all times. The removal of water from it is so easy due to being level with the ground, and it will be able to be transported through irrigation channels in order to water as much as they wanted to plant, creating very populous *haciendas*.

12. On the twenty-eighth day, I was informed by mail from Villa de Valles²²³ that the Captain Commander don Francisco de Barberena²²⁴ left the same town with 150 mounted men from his company, and the Captain don Philippe de Apressa Moctezuma with eighty seven of his from the Valley of Maíz²²⁵ prepared with everything necessary, and with some friendly Indians and interpreters directing them toward the north, in accord with the order they had previously received. With the same letter, don Francisco Soto Troncoso, Mayor of the group from Tontoyuca,²²⁶ Panuco,²²⁷ and Tampico, informed me that Captain don Francisco de Sosa marched the eighteenth day of the same month from said town of Tampico with 160 soldiers (including the corporals) equipped and prepared with everything necessary for more than two months, following the route to the northeast from the western point of Tamaulipa, according to the order that to this effect I had sent them. Although the referenced companies should have found themselves in line with me, according to the distances for the expressed twenty-eighth,

²²³ Modern-day Valles, San Luis Potosí. Leduc, *Diccionario*, 1031.

²²⁴ Barberena was named interim governor of Nuevo Santander by Escandón on October 2, 1755. Gabriel Saldivar. *Historia Compendiada de Tamaulipas* (Mexico City: Mexico, 1945), 299.

²²⁵ Modern-day Ciudad del Maíz, San Luis Potosí. Leduc, *Diccionario*, 171.

²²⁶ Modern-day Tantoyuca, Veracruz, Mexico. Leduc, *Diccionario*, 941.

²²⁷ Modern-day Panuco, Veracruz, Mexico. Leduc, *Diccionario*, 738.

they were unable to accomplish this due to a severe storm that lasted a few days overtaking them.

13. With Las Ruzias' valley explored and with all the companies leaving for their respective routes, I continued marching on the twenty-ninth day toward the western point of said hill of Tamaulipa, the old one, in a northeastern route, notwithstanding that various slopes, estuaries, arroyos, rivers, and bands of brush caused us to make various deviations. On the second day of February, I arrived at the stopping place where the Pilón²²⁸ and Santa Engracia²²⁹ rivers meet, about forty-five leagues away from the referenced Guadalupe River,²³⁰ all of which, for their fertility and abundance are very suitable for settlement. Here the western point of said hill ends, meeting that of Tamaulipa of the New Kingdom of Leon, which remains at its northeast, which appears to be about twenty-five leagues away. All have beautiful valleys and abundant water. Once explored, only some plateaus and slopes, which make the valleys more fertile, were found, and they have coverage, for which reason I judge them to be very suitable for settlement. Having crossed the river, I spent the night on its bank, where many fish, which are as abundant in this river as in all the others of this country, were caught.

14. On the fourth day of February, I continued atop a slope that is found to the north of said river, and at six leagues out, I arrived at the Valley of the Cerrito del Aire, having

²²⁸ Formally known as San Mateo del Pilón, this river runs near modern-day Montemorelos and General Terán in the Mexican state of Nuevo León. Montemayor Hernández, *Noticias*, 18n.

²²⁹ This river is born in the Sierra Madre and runs in the modern-day Mexican state of Tamaulipas. Leduc, *Diccionario*, 887.

²³⁰ Not to be confused with Guadalupe River in modern-day Texas, this river was near the Tula Mission in the modern-day state of Hidalgo, Mexico. *Ibid.*, 387.

met up that day during the march with about thirty barbarous Meco Indians²³¹ who, entertained and complimented with presents, returned very content to their *ranchería* Tamaulipa, the old one. This valley is very fertile due to its good lands, abundance of water, and mild temperament. It is about three leagues from south to north and at a little distance it begins opening and running along the skirts of Tamaulipa and *Sierra Madre*, continuing to San Antonio de los Llanos.²³² It runs to the south of San Antonio de los Llanos and up to the bank of said Ajuntas River,²³³ at a distance of about three leagues. To the west it has a ford and a pass toward Tamaulipa, the old one, on its western point. There are many savin trees, rocks, and firewood, and as many commodities that could be desired for a large settlement. In this stopping place, so many arroyos of water incorporate with said river on the south side as much as on the north side that they make it very voluminous. The sea extends for fifteen leagues until about five leagues from the referenced Cerrito del Aire where, at high tide, it rises to a *bara*²³⁴ and a quarter. The Tamaulipa hill, the old one, is located at the southern part from this site. Already expecting that the Huasteca²³⁵ and Panuco companies should meet up with me in that site, having requested them through various pickets that were dispatched to explore the

²³¹ Indians from the Sierra Gorda region. They are formally known as Chichimecas Tonases. Harold E. Driver and Wihelmine Driver, *Ethnography and Acculturation of the Chichimeca-Jonaz of Northeastern Mexico* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1963), 41.

²³² This is modern-day Hidalgo, Tamaulipas. It belonged to the New Kingdom of León until 1748, when Nuevo Santander was formed and it was renamed Santo Domingo de Ojos. Montemayor Hernández, *Noticias*, 20n.

²³³ The confluence of the Pílon and Santa Engracia rivers with the Río de la Purificación. These combined streams form the river known prior to 1747 as the Río de las Palmas. Weddle, *French Thorn*, 265.

²³⁴ A measurement equal to approximately thirty-three inches.

²³⁵ This name referred to the northwestern part of the modern-day state of Veracruz, Mexico, the southern part of modern-day Tamaulipas, and the eastern part of modern-day San Luis Potosí. Leduc, *Diccionario*, 445.

referenced river and the land surrounding it, and to open various bands of brush that impeded the pass to the route of the northeast that I would follow, I detained myself three days in which I experienced a rigorous thunderstorm that was exacerbated by the drove of horses in the number of 900 beasts that stampeded. With the loss of only six of them, they were subdued, although with much work, and seeing that the referenced companies still had not arrived, and that any delay that I experienced was detrimental to those from the New Kingdom of Leon, Coahuila, and the Province of Texas²³⁶ who were to meet up with me on pre-determined days, I decided to spend the next day in search of the Salinas de la Barra, leaving proper signals so that once said companies arrived, they would notify me by means of a picket.

15. On the seventh day of February I continued my march, and passing the referenced valley, I climbed a large plateau of very fertile grounds, various bands of thickets, and an abundance of dainty palms and wild onions. The plateau has some pools of water and two estuaries and some arroyos on its western point that offer all commodity for *haciendas* for planting, raising cattle, and settlements. The Indians of the nation called Bocas Prietas,²³⁷ whose Captain said he is called Santiago, inhabit it and its skirt. He and many of his companions peacefully joined me, remaining to spend that night in the camp with great satisfaction, offering to bring together all their *rancherías*²³⁸ to see me if

²³⁶ This province formed part of the New Kingdom of Spain. It was part of the Provincias Internas and later part of the State of Coahuila. Leduc, *Diccionario*, 976.

²³⁷ The Bocas Prietas were among the tribes called Borrados of the Sierra de San Carlos. They were considered enemies of the Comecrudos. Martín Salinas, *Indians of the Río Grande Delta: Their Role in the History of Southern Texas and Northeastern Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), 79-89.

²³⁸ An Indian settlement where dwellings are not permanent and are scattered some distance from each other. Barnes, *Northern New Spain*, 137.

I would remain the following day, and although I was in a hurry, and it did not seem appropriate for me to detain myself during that time, I stayed until eight in the morning. I dispensed provisions, small wares, and tobacco in abundance to many of them, with which they were very content and sure that I was not going to harm them. From what I could estimate, this nation of Bocas Prietas has about 400 families. They are truly barbarous. They do not have huts or any other thing to protect them from the sun or water, and they generally walk around totally nude with the exception of the women, who use a piece of deer hide or grass to cover up. They do not grow anything; they eat what they hunt or fish, or hearts of palms and wild roots. They are at continuous war with their neighboring *rancherías* to which they commit great harm. There are many apostates from the New Kingdom of Leon among them, who, having left their towns and missions, find secure cover there, and as they are skilled in entries and departures into the frontier. Accompanied by some of said Indians, they attack ranches and *haciendas*, performing harmful misfortunes. Having discussed the matter of settlement, they responded they were ready to assemble as long as it was there and that I leave them adequate lands to sustain them without relocating them to another area, which I offered to do, ordering them that in the meantime it be proven that they remain peaceful with Indians and Spaniards alike, which they have done up to this date.

16. From that camp, I continued to the Salinas de la Barra where I arrived on the tenth of February, after having traveled over some slopes and a spacious valley with little

water. There I found the Sergeant Major don Antonio Ladrón de Guevara,²³⁹ who, sent by don Vicente Bueno de la Borbolla,²⁴⁰ Governor and Captain General of this New Kingdom of Leon, had arrived the previous day with forty-five militia men and the eight arranged by the Presidio Boca de Leones,²⁴¹ ten servants of service, and fourteen friendly Indians who accompanied the Reverend Father Friar Diego Vasquez,²⁴² Minister of the Gualeguas Mission of the San Francisco de Zacatecas Province, and the Militia Captain don Nicolas Merino, a skilled soldier in those frontiers. Captain Merino left the town of Linares²⁴³ on the twenty-eighth day of January, as he was unable to do so before due to a strong thunderstorm having impeded him. The storm continued and he was delayed many days in his departure, which he conducted on the expressed route always keeping the banks of the Conchas River in his sights. The river is formed by a marsh that is made on the skirt of Tamaulipa and other various arroyos that extend from the borders of Linares, from which there could be forty-five to fifty leagues from the Salinas de la Barra. At a distance of six leagues from the referenced town on the bank of the rivers that comes down from it, he discovered the stopping place that they call the Mission Padre Blanco. It is of good ground, channels of water, and of great commodity

²³⁹ Ladrón de Guevara was a resident of Nuevo León who was appointed as one of Escandón's captains for this expedition. He previously undertook an expedition through Nuevo León, Coahuila, and Texas in the early eighteenth century and wrote his account of the ranches, settlements, missions, and Spanish frontier policy in 1739. See Jack D. Holmes, "Ladrón de Guevara, Antonio," in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, IV, 2.

²⁴⁰ Bueno de Borbolla was the governor of Nuevo León from 1746 to 1752. Barnes, *Northern New Spain*, 106.

²⁴¹ Formally called San Pedro de Boca de Leones, this is modern-day Villadama, Nuevo León, México. See Robert S. Weddle, *San Juan Bautista: Gateway to Spanish Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968), 57.

²⁴² Vázquez accompanied the party that set out from Monterrey by way of Linares. Carlos E. Castañeda. *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas 1519-1936*, 7 volumes, (Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones, 1936), III, 153.

²⁴³ Modern-day Linares, Nuevo León, Mexico. Montemayor Hernández, *Noticias*, 19n.

for founding a mission or town. In all of the rest of the distance, due to said Conchas River being so deep, he says that no water at all can be taken from it for watering, nor did he find a proper site for settlement until reaching the dams ten leagues from the Salinas de la Barra. Taking this into consideration, I left to examine the *lagunas* that produce salt and the entrance that is believed to be to the sea from the Conchas River, giving an order that at the same time (which was performed in the meantime) the companies from Villa de Valles remain in the proximity of the Cerrito del Aire until further notice, and the company from Tampico return to explore the coast up to the bank of said port so that with complete knowledge the providences that Your Excellency believed necessary could be undertaken in the future.

17. The Salinas de la Barra are found to the southeast with respect to San Antonio de los Llanos at a distance of about thirty-five leagues. They are large *lagunas* of salt water that continue along the ocean's bank with few intermediaries of land, running from close to the bank (which I named the estuary of Santander) of the referenced Ajuntas River or Cerrito del Aire up to the one of the Norte. Although salt forms more or less in abundance in all of them, up to this point only two or three had been discovered by the residents of the said New Kingdom who had entered the region escorted by companies from that region, but they left with such necessity due to fearing the Indians, that they were completely unaware if the sea penetrated the *salinas*, or of what they were composed. The Conchas River forms in the referenced marshes of Tamaulipa from the waters from the borders of the town of Linares, and during the time of rain, it is rigorous. The river enters one of these *lagunas* at about four leagues to the north of those named

La Barra. The river diverts the *lagunas* by running through them and by carrying them without having an opening to the sea, where, as it is believed, a lot of water joins the river through some dry channels that there are among the sand dunes when it increases in strength to the southeast from what was discovered. All of the Indians that were observed gathered there, making a demonstration from the stopping place through which they traveled dragging a pirogue, which appeared to be from a sloop, over some round post from the sea to said *lagunas*. They said they had taken it from the French, who two years ago had been shipwrecked on that coast, to which they added that had killed and eaten some of them, taking them as enemies, showing some hats and five pesos with the Mexican stamp and some other things of little value that they said they took from them.²⁴⁴ I found said sloop to be open and so mistreated that it was not possible to repair it in order to perform the exploration in it. The same happened with another of the same quality that they said they found on the coast.

18. Salt generally forms along the bank and bottom of the *lagunas* from the beginning of the month of March until September in such abundance that no number of people was sufficient to remove it all, but any amount of rain that falls into the water destroys it, and the same occurs with the north wind, meaning that the *laguna* to the south produces the most salt. The salt is heavy, white, thick, and strong smelling. In order to remove it from the water, they pile it up and light it on fire at the top. Once dry, it remains undamaged for many years. Due to the continual rains, there was not very much at the present time.

²⁴⁴ Weddle notes, “although this ship could not have been the Chevalier Grenier’s *Superbe*, her crew suffered a similar fate,” (*French Thorn*, 269n).

19. These *lagunas* are so abundant with every kind of fish, especially sea bream, barbel, and bass that I have not seen another thing like it anywhere. The Indians travel through the majority of the *lagunas* to their islets and coast with the water at their chests or a little higher in some parts, and they provided themselves with drinking water from various small wells that they hand dug along the banks, even though it comes out salty.

20. To the west of said Salinas de la Barra, some beautiful plains extend where some low hills join them, and at a distance of about six leagues a high mountainous ridge extends to the northeast. Some arroyos of water extend from these, and although they offer few watering holes, they are sufficient to maintain a good settlement due to the fertility that the land invites, as well as the commodities that open the door for commerce in salt, fish, seeds, and all kinds of livestock that are able to be raised in abundance.

21. I spent the cited tenth day through the twentieth of February performing the expressed exploration, very bothered by the continual storms, but with special pleasure due to the good disposition that I found in the Indians that live along the banks of the Conchas River on the western side of said Salinas de la Barra that are named Pintos,²⁴⁵

²⁴⁵ In the middle of the eighteenth century the Pinto Indians, whose name is Spanish and probably refers to tattooing, ranged over northern Tamaulipas and the adjoining part of southern Texas. In 1749 one group was encountered near San Fernando, Tamaulipas; others lived on both sides of the Río Grande, particularly in the area now the Reynosa-McAllen sector. In 1757 there was a Pinto settlement in what is now southern Hidalgo County. See Thomas N. Campbell, "Pinto Indians," in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, V, 217.

Pamoranos,²⁴⁶ Quedejanos,²⁴⁷ and Quinicuanes.²⁴⁸ They are composed of about 150 families whose Captain, who is called Marcos de Villanueva²⁴⁹ (he is a Christian married in the New Kingdom of Leon who had lived in these parts for a few years) had informed them of my entry, and who were so well instructed on the end to which it was directed that they immediately asked me for a settlement in that stopping place, assuring me that they would gather there as soon as a suitable number of Spaniards lived there so that expressed Bocas Prietas, their enemies, would not harm them. He said the 150 families from the Comecrudo nation,²⁵⁰ who's Captain I named Marcos de la Cruz, would also gather with them. They live in the western part among the same *lagunas* and the ocean's sandbars. I encountered many of them there, and having gone to see the *rancherías* of said Comecrudos, which is about five leagues between some *lagunas* and marshes, they came out to meet me with their women and children, performing the greatest demonstrations of happiness. They presented me with plenty of fish, roasted and raw, especially bass, of which they have many live ones gathered in nets in the water. I spent the entire day with them, giving them plenty of biscuits, tobacco, knives and small

²⁴⁶ Members of this group were followers of Marcos Villanueva. They lived with the Pintos, Quedejeños, and the Quinicuanes west of the Salinas de las Barra on the banks of the lower San Fernando River. Salinas, *Indians of the Río Grande Delta*, 75.

²⁴⁷ This group was first recorded at Mission San Christobál de los Hualahuises near Linares. They were closely associated with the Pamoranos, Pintos, and Quinicuanes. *Ibid.*, 77.

²⁴⁸ This group was associated with the Pintos, Pamoranos, and Quedejeños. They are known by this name in documents from the first half of the eighteenth century and were not recorded after 1757. *Ibid.*, 78-79.

²⁴⁹ A Christianized Pinto Indian who was married to a Tlaxcaltecan woman of Hualahuises. He led the Pintos, Pamoranos, Quedejeños, and the Quinicuanes. *Ibid.*, 75.

²⁵⁰ The Comecrudo Indians were a Coahuiltecan people who in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries lived in northern Tamaulipas. In the second half of the eighteenth century part of the Comecrudos lived along the south bank of the Río Grande near Reynosa, and it may be inferred that they hunted and gathered wild plant foods on both sides of the river. At times the Comecrudo Indians were also referred to as Carrizo, a Spanish name applied to many Coahuiltecan groups along the Río Grande below Laredo. See Thomas N. Campbell, "Comecrudo" in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, II, 247.

wares, making them understand the settlement was to be located close to the *salinas*, and the spiritual and temporal conveniences they would achieve by gathering there. They responded that they were ready to do it, and I do not doubt they will fulfill this according to the expressions with which they have promised it and the calmness with which they have remained without harming anyone, asking when I will form the settlement.

22. In the days that I remained in that stopping place, I practiced the most exact diligences in order to find out the exact distance to the Río del Norte, and if there were watering holes or *lagunas* that impeded the path, but these were all in vain because due to those Indians never having gotten along with those on the northern side, as they had only dared to cross the Conchas River, they were totally ignorant of what I asked them, and the same occurred with the soldiers of the New Kingdom of Leon, who were unaware of any Spaniard who had traveled through those stopping places. The Indians and Spaniards only agreed that the distance to the Río del Norte was very great with never ending plains without water, and that one could only find some salt water arroyos. All this was complicated by the fact that I found myself without an interpreter who understood the language of these nations due to the two for whom I had sent from the town of Linares, forty-five leagues away from said stopping place, not having arrived due to the continual rains. Finding myself above twenty-five degrees, and with the demarcations of the river mouth at the sea of the referenced Río Bravo or Grande del Norte at twenty three and a half, I decided to set out in search of the Río del Norte with fifty select soldiers on good horses, ten sappers with beams and axes, in case it was necessary to open a path, the Reverend Father Friar Lorenzo de Medina, the Sergeant

Major don Antonio de Guevara, the Captain of this regiment, don Joseph Diaz Maldonado, four other officials, six of the most important Indians from those *rancherías* (who happily accompanied me), and the necessary provisions for fifteen days.

23. On the twenty-first of February, after having celebrated four masses and having sent the very Reverend Father Friar Agustin de Jesus with forty soldiers to their homes due to considering them no longer necessary, and having sent the fifteen soldiers from Tula and Guadalcazar home due to suspecting they might be missed in theirs, I left the camp with the preparations that it required for its security in the care of the very Reverend Father, Commissary of the missions, Fray Joseph Ortes de Velasco, his helper don Joseph Ambrosio de Avila, and don Pedro Gonzales, Captain of the soldiers from the Presidio Boca de Leones, with special care for the Indians of the nearby *rancherías*. At eight in the morning, I marched to the north-northeast, and on the twenty-fourth, at nine in the morning, I arrived at the bank of the Río del Norte at a distance of twelve leagues from the sea, which are measured between the river and the Salinas de la Barra or the Conchas River, from where I departed. The area is twenty-five leagues across, its terrain very flat, with the exception of some low rolling hills and it is of beautiful quality for all kinds of planting and raising livestock due to producing the best pasturage I have ever seen in as far as I have traveled, remaining green year round due to the plentiful rains that fertilize it. In said distance there is neither a river nor an arroyo, but we found decent watering holes and small pools in some marshes that appeared to be permanent and transited, and they convince me that many more will be found. Wild horses, donkeys, and deer abound in these plains, all of which have deformed bodies. There are

few thickets as only a few bands of mesquite trees, ebony wood, and oaks of medium stature run through them.

24. On the referenced bank of the Río del Norte, I found (as soon as I arrived) the Captain of the Cerralvo Presidio,²⁵¹ don Blas María de la Garza²⁵² with forty-two soldiers, eleven of said presidio, nine militia men from Cerralvo, fifteen from the *salinas*, and seven from Cadereyta.²⁵³ Captain de la Garza Falcón departed from said town of Cerralvo on the twenty-first of January walking to the east (according to the measurements of his trips) sixty-eight leagues which, with the twelve that there are from this stopping place to the sea, make the distance from it to the referenced town of Cerralvo eighty leagues from east to west. He said he was delayed so long due to the continual storms he had battled.

25. This same day don Carlos Cantú and one of his brothers, residents of the Linares jurisdiction, arrived at the camp. They are good soldiers and are skilled in the languages of the nations of the frontiers and are the same ones that I expressed having sent for from the Conchas River in number 22. In their company, they had three interpreters and a

²⁵¹ Formally known as San Gregorio de Cerralvo, this is modern-day Cerralvo, Nuevo León, Mexico. Montemayor Hernández, *Noticias*, 15.

²⁵² Captain Blas María de la Garza Falcón (1712-1767), colonizer of South Texas and Tamaulipas and the first settler of Nueces County, Texas, was born in Real de las Salinas, Nuevo León, Mexico, in 1712. By 1734 he was a captain at Presidio de San Gregorio de Cerralvo in Nuevo León. On March 5, 1749, Garza Falcón arranged for forty families from Nuevo León to settle at Camargo on the banks of the Río Grande. He founded the villa of Camargo, a presidio for the military squadron, and a mission, San Agustín de Laredo, for the Indians. Escandón named him captain and chief justice of Camargo, the first settlement founded on the Río Grande. In 1752 Garza Falcón established a ranch, Carnestolendas, now the site of Río Grande City, Texas, on the north side of the river. See Clotilde P. García, “Garza Falcón, Blas María de la” in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, III, 110.

²⁵³ This is modern-day Cadereyta Jiménez, Nuevo León, Mexico. Montemayor Hernández, *Noticias*, 17n.

barbarous Indian who I named Santiago,²⁵⁴ who is the Captain that all of the Indians who inhabit both sides of the Río Grande from the sea to the San Juan River²⁵⁵ obey.

Through him, by means of the referenced three Indians, as one of them spoke his language, I discovered the number of nations that inhabit said river banks, their customs, alliances and the wars they have among each other, the estuaries and *lagunas* from the coast to the Nueces River,²⁵⁶ and the paths they offer through their tributaries towards the Presidio de la Barra. The companies of Coahuila and the Bahía del Espíritu Santo²⁵⁷ were located in stopping places, and I later wrote them through the hand of don Cantú, advising them what they needed to do. The referenced Captain Santiago has a strange shaped body. He is timid and is respected among his people. He is of clear understanding and very affectionate for the Spaniards. I dressed him and presented him with gifts, and later, he began to summon his people by means of smoke, and they immediately began to gather.

26. Having placed my camp at a distance of about three quarters of a league from the river, I spent that afternoon exploring some large *lagunas* in the surrounding area. The river runs to the east even though it makes some deviations. In that stopping place, the river is about eighty leagues wide and about three to four deep, with a swift current. Its

²⁵⁴ Santiago was the leader of the Comecrudos of the Río Grande. He was also the leader of other Indian groups of the area. Salinas, *Indians of the Río Grande Delta*, 38.

²⁵⁵ This river has the same name today and runs in the State of Nuevo León in the Sierra of Santiago valley. Leduc, *Diccionario*, 866.

²⁵⁶ This is the modern Nueces River in Zapata County. See William C. Foster, *Spanish Expeditions into Texas 1689-1768* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995), 124.

²⁵⁷ This is modern day Matagorda Bay and Lavaca Bay on the Texas coast. The mission Bahía del Espíritu Santo, founded in 1722 and one of the oldest and most successful in Texas, was to serve area Karankawa Indians: the Cocos, Copanes, and Cujanes. The mission was placed in the care of the Franciscans from the College of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de Zacatecas and was established in connection with Nuestra Señora de Loreto Presidio. See Craig H. Roell, "Nuestra Señora del Espíritu Santo de Zúñiga Mission" in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, IV, 1062-1063.

water is light and fresh, although cold, and in more than thirty leagues the level rises only one or two *baras* above that of where it originates, and less than that in other places, with its currents extending out on various sides leaving such large *lagunas* that in few places one is able to arrive at it without the risk that I experienced. Having detained myself in the referenced exploration until prayer and leaving in a hurry for the same stopping place that I had entered, as I went in the middle of the *laguna*, the water was so high in parts that the horses were swimming and I observed a strong northern was arising. It picked up at that moment and was violently bringing the water from another nearby large *laguna* to it, which is what I regularly observed happens in those plains. I found myself in the conflict of not being able to go back due to being in the deepest part, and with night approaching, I almost lost hope of getting out. Aside from the amount of water, the mud holes were so large that all the horses were so tired and weak that it was necessary for me to walk for close to four hours with water up to my chest, which is how I got out with some officials and twenty-one soldiers who accompanied me with less harm than some weapons and clothing remaining in the water.

27. On the twenty-seventh day, leaving camp in that stopping place, I left with four officials, thirty-five soldiers, and the Indian Captain Santiago to explore the passage of said river at the sea where I arrived at three in the afternoon. Its distance is twelve leagues to the east; its terrain is flat with the exception of some low laying hills, and it is of the best quality for planting and grasslands. There are some marshes and estuaries that we passed, although with some difficulty, and as much water as is needed is able to be removed from the estuaries and the expressed *lagunas* by means of irrigations

channels. The river has no trees except for some willows near the sea and some decent bands of overgrown clumps of mesquite shrubs. Before arriving at said ocean bank, at about 300 *baras*, a river channel emerges that is about ten *baras* wide and two *baras* deep. The river channel that runs to the south to the first *laguna* joins all the rest of the *lagunas* close to those of La Barra. This river's current is according to the wind, sometimes running from the river to the *lagunas*, and other times in an opposite direction. We passed it by means of a bridge that was built from palisade embankment.

28. On the twenty-eighth, I had a raft constructed in order to see if I would be able to ford said river with it, and crossing to the other side to explore another arm that is separated from it by a distance of a half a league to the west that enters the sea to a quarter to the north, which I performed. The bank or canal of the Río Bravo or Grande del Norte is a little less than fifty *baras* wide at the entrance to the sea in which there is not even a cove, and it is a little more than three *baras* deep, but it has such a formidable current that for more than a league it seems it cuts through the ocean without its waves being able to overtake it. Its water remains so fresh before arriving at the sea that only at high tide, at which time it arrives to a little more than four *baras* deep, do I judge that some boats would be able to enter it, but in more than sixty leagues no refuge at all is found in it due to the land being very flat and the borders of its banks being so low. It is found at twenty-six degrees and four minutes latitude.

29. The second arm, although it is seventy *baras* wide, carries less water through its small current and it is slightly rapid only in the middle. At the southern part it forms a canal about fifteen *baras* wide that descend to the sea, and it is two and a half *baras*

deep. This enters through two large sand dunes about 400 *baras* long. At the end of those, there is a large *laguna* in which it seems boats would have some shelter if they enter at the east and southeast, but it remains undiscovered to the north, south, and southeast.

30. In order to conquer the river's current with the raft, aside from the various ropes that were attached to each side, two horses that two swimmers guided who were experienced in similar ventures were fastened to the raft, and even with this preparation it was overturned on the last attempt with two officials and seven soldiers inside it, and in order to explore it on land, we suffered great fatigues. In the passage of said river channel, where it joins the *lagunas*, the abundance of all kinds of fish is unimaginable. On the beach there were some empty bottles and various poles and planks of boats that the southeasterly winds (which are those that appear to me to be the most permanent in that coast) have tossed upon the beach.

31. Tampico's beach runs toward the referenced Río del Norte with very little incline at a quarter league to the north/north-east. The beach can be walked upon without any difficulty due to the sand being firm and there being water and grass in the surrounding area. At a distance of about twenty leagues from the Tampico sandbar, one passes the sandbar called Trinidad, and eight leagues to the north of it, the one of Tordo, and eight leagues from that one, the one of Las Palmas. All of these, due to having little water, are easily traveled. The sandbar of the Nuevo Santander estuary, of which I spoke in numbers 11, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, and 63, is ten leagues from this last one. This will only be able to be passed with boats or canoes due to being wide and deep, or over the ford

that it has fifteen leagues up river, and from there to the referenced one of El Norte and I did not find any other sandbar that impeded the pass. A file of sandbars that appear to be made in a straight line and are shaped like sugar loafs are observed even at a great distance throughout all the referenced distance between this and the *lagunas*. They are of reasonable height and come out from that part of the land that is flat, and there is only stone on the expressed bank of Nuevo Santander.

32. From the referenced Río del Norte to the Bahía del Espíritu Santo (which runs in the same path) the coastal Indians assure me that the same thing occurs, but that there are some wide sandbars that are only able to be passed with pirogues.

33. On the first day of March, I returned to the camp, where I arrived at eight at night due to having spent time in exploring the commodities that those valleys offer. I found more than 200 Indian families on both side of the river and coast, who, gathered by the signals that are expressed in number 25 made by the named Captain Santiago, had arrived and who remain gathered in *rancherías* at a distance of a quarter league from said camp.

34. As I noted in number 24, from the expressed sea bank to the town and Presidio of San Gregorio there are eighty leagues from east to west, forty from the stopping place where the San Juan River and El Norte join, and forty leagues along the ridge of said town of Cerralvo. The first forty leagues along the bank of the Río Grande are flat with low hills. They are fertile with good grasslands of grama grass and have decent bands of mesquite thickets, ash trees, elms, poplars and other similar types of trees. No arroyos or rivers are found in these leagues that enter into El Norte, but as in this one so many

lagunas and estuaries form along its southern banks, there is abundant water for raising livestock of the large and small variety, as well as for watering fields, and this is easily able to be taken by means of irrigation channels. In the first twenty leagues from the sea, no groves of trees other than some willows are observed, but in the next twenty there are decent woods. If the settlers accomplish founding a settlement there, they will be able to transport as much wood as is needed from the referenced San Juan River, which has a great abundance of wood, and from the Sabine River, which joins said Río Grande about twenty-four leagues to the northeast of the referenced San Juan, without more cost than carrying it downstream on rafts. There is very little stone, but mud and bricks can supplement this defect. There is some wild livestock, cattle and horses, an abundance of wild garlic and onions of such great flavor, like those they grow in orchards, and palms and roots with which, in addition to the plentiful fish and hunting, the Indians of that entire river basin sustain themselves. In that river basin, oysters are also cultivated, and the Indians said they produce some pearls to which they did not pay attention, due to not knowing what they were.

35. From the referenced San Juan River, close to the ford or pass, which I named Azúcar,²⁵⁸ a large irrigation channel of water can be made, which, placed in the vicinity of the one of El Norte downstream, will facilitate the watering of much land. In this stopping place, the referenced Captain don Blas María de la Garza tells me that there are many residents who raise cattle and who are ready to go and settle as soon as settlement begins.

²⁵⁸ A crossing for the San Juan River in the modern-day state of Tamaulipas, Mexico. Leduc, *Diccionario*, 129.

36. The San Juan River forms in El Guajuco.²⁵⁹ That of Ramos,²⁶⁰ Pílon,²⁶¹ Labradores, and Monterrey enter it, which is why it continually carries a lot of water, and aside from the many tall savin trees, and ash trees that grow on its banks, the bands of all types of trees that it has on both sides are so tall that as many as are wanted could be carried downstream in the Río del Norte.

37. In the referenced forty leagues, all along the banks of the river to the southern part, there are Indian *rancherías*, whose names, starting with the coastal ones first, are: the Comecrudos, from upstream (which is the largest), the Salapaguemes,²⁶² the Tanaquipemes,²⁶³ the Inyopacanes, the Atanaguipacanes (which is also large), the Zaulapaguet, the Calexpaguet, the Artepeguem, the Sagutmapacam, the Sicalasyampaquet, the Iguipacam, the Cospacam, the Apemapem, the Humalayapem, the Guajepocotiyo, and the Sumaqualapem. All of the captains of these *rancherías*, which they call nations, gathered with me with the greatest signs of happiness and satisfaction. The captains, together with the Indians that gathered, hunted for deer and birds, and they went fishing, and it was with such success that several of them and the Captain Santiago came with me to the Salinas de la Barra. I was unable to exactly calculate the number of Indians from each of these *rancherías*, but it seemed to be more than 1,500 families. I was not able to find any apostates among them, nor did I find

²⁵⁹ A beautiful and fertile canyon in the modern-day state of Tamaulipas, Mexico. Ibid., 443.

²⁶⁰ This river is located in the modern-day state of Nuevo León. It is born in the Sierra Madre. Ibid., 804.

²⁶¹ This river is formally called San Mateo del Pílon. It runs through the modern-day towns of Montemorelos and General Terán, Nuevo León. It later joins the San Juan River. Montemayor Hernández, *Noticias*, 18n.

²⁶² First recorded by Escandón on this expedition, a few members of this group entered missions in San Antonio in the 1780s. Salinas, *Indians of the Río Grande Delta*, 61.

²⁶³ This group was first recorded in 1732 as one of the numerous groups living on the eastern frontier of Nuevo León. Some entered Missions Cabezón de la Sal in 1749. Ibid., 64-65.

reason to believe they would damage the frontiers of the New Kingdom of Leon. They crave biscuits and tobacco. When they gathered together, I did not lose a moment to instruct them in the spiritual and temporal benefits that they will gain. They remained so disposed that consequently no doubt offers itself to me. They put as a condition of their settling that under no condition would they leave that land where they were born and raised, and that the Spaniards had to live with them and had to give them some seeds to plant and some oxen with the necessary equipment. I agreed to all of this and dispensed a good portion of small wares, tobacco, biscuits and other things to them with which the men and women were so thankful that they did not leave me day or night, and these are the best types of gunpowder and bullets that are needed for similar conversions. These Indians are totally nude, except for the women who cover themselves with a piece of hide or some herbs. They are corpulent, agile, and are good shooters of arrows, which are the only weapons that they use. As they have not had any trade in the frontier, they remain untamed without law or any adoration for anything, for which reason I judge they will easily begin to learn the rudiments of Our Holy Catholic Faith.

38. All these Indians recognize and observe said Captain Santiago as their Captain General, even though there is a captain in each one of the *rancherías* who governs them, and a lieutenant who does so in their absence. The Indians on the northern side of said Río Grande also recognize Santiago as their captain. They live in the following *rancherías*: Hunpuzliegui, Tunlepem, Mayapem,²⁶⁴ Seguejulapem, Peumepuem, Cootajam, Sepinpacam, Parammatugu, Perpepug, Coucuguyapem, Tlanchugin,

²⁶⁴ This group was first recorded by Escandón on this expedition. Descendants from this group continued to live on or near the Río Grande delta into the late 1790s. Ibid., 49-50.

Pexpacux, Hueplapiaguilam, and Imasacuajulam. Among these, some have many Indians, and from them some captains gathered who, after receiving gifts, offered to gather in the same manner as those from the southern part.

39. The other forty leagues that run from said San Juan River to the Presidio de Cerralvo are all uninhabited, and have various high hills. They are mountainous without irrigation or any other special thing to invite its settlement, although they could be good for raising all varieties of livestock. There are very few Indians who live in these forty leagues, and almost all are apostates from the missions and town of the New Kingdom of Leon.

40. The Captain of said Cerralvo Presidio, don Blas María de la Garza Falcón obediently obeyed the order I had previously sent him, as did his soldiers. In the event that the sovereignty of Your Excellency deems it necessary, you can order him to the referenced Río del Norte, then to the San Juan River, and down to the sea. I consider him very appropriate to this end, as much for his desire to do it, as for the skill and knowledge that he already has of the land and the Indians who inhabit it.

41. On the twenty-first of January, don Pedro de Rábago y Terán,²⁶⁵ Governor and Captain General of the Province of Coahuila, sent Captain don Miguel de la Garza Falcón, who is from the Presidio del Sacramento,²⁶⁶ with forty soldiers, twenty-five from the capital of Coahuila and ten militia men, four from the capital, two from Santa

²⁶⁵ Pedro de Rábago y Terán (?-1756) was an experienced administrator and military captain on the northern frontier of New Spain. He served from August 1744 to June 1754 as governor of Coahuila and as captain of Presidio de San Francisco (at the site of present Monclova). Rábago y Terán was appointed captain of Presidio del Sacramento on November 13, 1753. See Donald E. Chipman, "Rábago y Terán, Pedro de" in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, V, 400.

²⁶⁶ This is modern-day Villa de Sacramento, Coahuila. Montemayor Hernández, *Noticias*, 34n.

Rosa,²⁶⁷ two from San Mathias Valley, and two others from San Juan Bautista.²⁶⁸ They accompanied twenty-five friendly Indians from the Mission San Juan Bautista and San Bernardo, who were all informed of what was necessary. He walked about fifty leagues to the northeast until crossing the Sabinas River,²⁶⁹ according to the travels that he enters. A severe snowstorm delayed him for many days. From there he continued twenty-five leagues along the same route to the Río Grande. He passed to the northern bank having been unable to get very far away from it, as I had ordered him, so that he could join the Captain of the Bahía del Espíritu Santo. Due to a lack of watering holes, he continued along its banks southeasterly and easterly until the eighth of March. He received my order to turn back, leaving that side explored, which he did, having arrived at the sea along the bank of the arm of the river that is to the north, which he says was not advantageous for planting crops. He says that from the Río del Norte to the sea, he did not find a proper stopping place for settlement due to the lack of water for planting and due to the ground being so flat and soft. With the majority of the other captains of the *rancherías* that I named in number 38 having left him with great affection and confidence six days after having said goodbye to me, he added the news of some other nations that there are on that side, and with all happiness he returned to the capital of Coahuila on the twenty-eighth of March. This captain was unable to arrive in time to

²⁶⁷ A mountain range in the modern-day state of Coahuila where the Sabinas river is born. Leduc, *Diccionario*, 892.

²⁶⁸ Formally known as the Presidio de San Juan Bautista del Río, this presidio was established in 1702 to provide military protection to the Mission San Juan Bautista. See Weddle, *San Juan Bautista*, 53. It is the site of modern-day Guerrero, Coahuila. A. Joachim McGraw, John W. Clark, Jr., and Elizabeth A. Robbins, *A Texas Legacy: The Old San Antonio Road and the Caminos Reales, A Tricentennial History, 1691-1991* (Austin: Texas Department of Transportation, 1991), 12.

²⁶⁹ This river is located in the modern-day state of Coahuila. It forms in the Santa Rosa mountain range to the northeast of Múzquiz. Leduc, *Diccionario*, 838.

join me at the bank of the Río Grande, near the sea, as I had ordered him, nor was he able to leave the northern side due to exploring the land as well as for joining the troop from the Bahía del Espíritu Santo and Los Adaes, but he is excused for both due to snow having impeded the first, and lack of watering holes having impeded the second. It seems hard work to me to overcome the difficulties that he experienced during his march and that he acted as a good soldier on all occasions, and although he writes that he traveled 186 leagues from the capital of Coahuila to the sea, according to my calculations, there are many fewer, notwithstanding that the precision of continuing the river's course forced him to make many deviations. The referenced governor don Pedro Rábago y Terán facilitated the dispatch of the referenced companies with the greatest generosity and conscientiousness for which reason he is worthy of the sovereignty of Your Excellency sending him your thanks.

42. Don Francisco Garcia Larios,²⁷⁰ Governor and Captain General of the Province of Texas or Los Adaes, sent twenty-five soldiers equipped with everything necessary as soon as he received word to the Presidio Bahía del Espíritu Santo, and, although they did not arrive at said Presidio until the twenty-fourth of January, it was due to the great amount of snow that fell during those days that impeded their march.

43. The Captain don Joaquin de Orobio y Bazterra, who is from the Presidio Bahía del Espíritu Santo, left on the twenty-ninth of said month of January with twenty-five soldiers from his personnel and with the twenty-five that were sent to him from Los Adaes. The Reverend Father Friar Juan Gonzales, a religious from the Apostolic

²⁷⁰ Larios served as governor of Texas from 1744-48. Barnes, *Northern New Spain*, 114.

College of Our Lady of Guadalupe of Zacatecas,²⁷¹ Minister of that mission, accompanied him. He was unable to depart previously, due to the amount of snow that covered his party, and directing his march to the south (as he was instructed), he arrived at the Nueces River, thirty-nine leagues away from said Presidio. He continued his march twenty-five leagues along the same route. He was advised by some barbarous Indians that there was no fresh water along the route he was travelling until the Río Grande. He determined this to be true due to having the results of an inspection that he made by means of various pickets and their discovering that all the *lagunas* produced salt and their water was completely salty. He decided to take a southeasterly route along the road to the Río Grande del Norte, where he reached its bank (fifty-two leagues distant from the sea) on the eighth day of March at the stopping place they call El Cántaro pass. This is where the soldiers from Cerralvo and the New Kingdom of Leon cross when they go for salt at the referenced Salinas del Río Grande del Norte, which are found twelve leagues to the west of the mouth of the San Juan River, and twelve to the east on that side of that of the Sabinas River. Here Captain Orobio y Bazterra found an order that I sent him by means of a picket of soldiers that he should send me timely detailed notice of all that he had observed during his trip when all his people and stock had recovered from the toils they suffered due to the great lack of water that they had in the last forty-six leagues. Content with all the terrain that stretched from there to the sea being explored, he and his party returned to their presidio, performing some diligences

²⁷¹ This College was founded by the College of Santa Cruz de Querétaro to send missionaries to Texas. During its period of missionary endeavor in Texas, the College founded several missions. See Anonymous, "College of Santa Cruz de Querétaro," in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, II, 210-211.

that seemed convenient to me during his return trek, and as soon as he arrived, he ordered the twenty-five soldiers from Los Adaes who had accompanied him to go home.

44. The Presidio Bahía del Espíritu Santo is situated fourteen leagues to the northeast of the bay on the bank of the Guadalupe River. Its temperature is extreme in cold and heat and its terrain is unfruitful due to the lack of watering that it is never able to obtain due to flat land and being very rocky. Despite this defect, the religious of the Apostolic College of Guadalupe of Zacatecas, who administer that mission and presidio, have worked hard trying to resolve the mission with growing expenses, and they have been unable to achieve any irrigation, nor produce anything. As they are unable to grow any seasonal grain, they see it as necessary to bring what they need for sustenance for the Indians and soldiers from the Presidio of San Antonio, which is sixty leagues from that of San Juan, and from other more remote places with unbearable costs, as well as indispensable escorts for its secure transport. I have been unable to verify if the Indians remain in said mission all year long, due to not having anything to eat there, or if the exact diligences that those zealous apostolic men practice are enough for their complete provision, or if any settlers have settled there.

45. From the referenced presidio, Captain Orobio y Bazterra marched toward the San Antonio River where he arrived at its bank, and with his camp set upon it, he explored the western part in a distance of eight leagues. Even though he did find a portion suitable for removing water due to narrowness of said river, he notes that its land is fertile with admirable grass, good coverage of many trees and suitable for raising all types of livestock.

46. Having returned to the referenced Camp of Santa Clara, Captain Orobio y Bazterra set out downstream to the east and at eight leagues, and in the stopping place that he named Santa Dorotea, he found that the river, which flows between two hills, allows for easy removal of water. There is a plain about a half a league wide to the north and another where a decent number of seeds can be planted and watered for the maintenance of the mission and presidio. He notes it to have decent woods, stone, cal, fertile ground, good grass and coverage, and that all of the good qualities that are required for a settlement converge in the stopping spot. At a distance of six leagues, this river enters between large hills and craggy ground in the Bahía del Espíritu Santo, which is deep enough for boats and similar vessels that contribute much to settlement through fishing and the transportation of woods and materials, and for the register and care of said bay. The Indians of the Cujanes²⁷² nation, which has about seventy families, and that of the Carancaguazes, whose numbers reach a hundred, live on the outskirts of this stopping place. They have never been able to gather, despite the great diligences that the religious and captains have performed to that effect, and I see the primary cause being the lack of equipment and the lack of labor and commodities.

²⁷² The Cujane (Cohanni, Coxane, Cujano, Guyane, Kohani, Qujane, Quxane) Indians were Karankawans who, when first mentioned by this name in the early eighteenth century, lived on the Texas coast near Matagorda Bay, where they were closely associated with the Coapites and the Karankawas proper. In the 1730s a few Cujane Indians were persuaded to enter Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de Acuña Mission at San Antonio. In 1745, when Espíritu Santo de Zuñiga Mission was moved to the vicinity of present Goliad, some of the Cujanes came but soon deserted the mission. Then in 1754 Nuestra Señora del Rosario Mission was established in the Goliad area for the Cujanes, whose name at this time became a general name for all Karankawan groups except Copanes. The Cujane Indians were in and out of this mission until it was secularized in 1831. See Thomas N. Campbell, "Cujane Indians," in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, II, 435.

47. Having returned to Santa Clara Camp due to the snow growing worse and the livestock having stampeded, Captain Orobio y Bazterra remained in that stopping place until the sixteenth day of February, and after the weather and livestock calmed down, he continued marching to the south to the Nueces River, twenty-five leagues away, where he arrived on the twenty-first and he set up camp by a nearby *laguna*, which he named Santa Bárbara.

48. From the referenced Santa Clara pass of the San Antonio River to the referenced one of the Nueces, he found six arroyos of good water and beautiful terrain with grass, hills and commodities for settlement.

49. This Nueces River, which up to this point was thought to join that of El Norte, enters the sea in that stopping place where it forms a large bay that he named San Miguel Archangel. It is about two and a half leagues wide and many more in length, for which reason its banks stretch into the shape of a horseshoe. The bay is encircled by high hills, especially on the south and southeasterly parts. The ocean's current extends up the river past its mouth in the referenced bay about three leagues in which much salt coagulates. Its depth was unable to be determined due to lack of a boat, but Captain Orobio y Bazterra was able to do it on the north beach, where the bank can be traveled upon, which he had been unable to reach previously due to some overgrown woods that were growing nearby having blocked his path.

50. On both sides of this river, in which there are many fish, there are beautiful valleys, grasslands, and as much water as is wanted can be removed with ease for a large

settlement in which the Indians of the Zuncal,²⁷³ Pajasequeis or Carrizos, Apatin,²⁷⁴ Nacuap, Ippantapajeis nations, who live along the streams on the nearby coast live, could gather.

51. The twenty-sixth day Captain Orobio y Bazterra continued his march to the south to the Arroyo Purísima Concepción,²⁷⁵ which he found full of salt, although it is dispersed throughout. Fresh water still runs to the west, and on the third of March, he found the Lake of Santísima Trinidad,²⁷⁶ which is seven leagues to the south of the previous one. He says it forms at the sea itself and runs about six leagues to the east where it enters into three salt water arroyos, and that in it as well as in them there is an abundance of salt, and it has islets and knolls in the middle as well as along the banks, and having walked another eighteen leagues along the same route, he arrived at a lake that he named San Francisco Javier.

52. In this stopping place, with the Indian guide that he had with him expressing that there was no fresh water along the southern route to the Río del Norte (which was still far away) and that he would only find water by taking the southeasterly route. He took it, and marching along it, he arrived at the referenced Río del Norte on the eighth day of March at the stopping place that I note in number 43. Captain Orobio y Bazterra adds

²⁷³ Juncal (Juncatagu, Juncata, Junced, Zuncal) Indians were one of five bands of Coahuiltecan Indians encountered by Escandón near the site of future Corpus Christi. At this time the Juncals were also referred to as Carrizo, a name commonly applied by the Spanish to Coahuiltecan bands along the Río Grande below Laredo. During the same period Juncal families entered San Antonio de Valero Mission at San Antonio. See Thomas N. Campbell, "Juncal Indians," in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, III, 1018.

²⁷⁴ The Apatin Indians were one of five bands of Coahuiltecan Indians encountered near the site of present Corpus Christi by a Spanish expedition in the middle eighteenth century. They are not mentioned in later documents. See Thomas N. Campbell, "Apatin Indians," in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, I, 213.

²⁷⁵ Modern-day Agua Dulce creek in south Texas. Weddle, *French Thorn*, 273.

²⁷⁶ Modern-day Baffin Bay, Texas. *Ibid.*, 273.

that some Cueroquemado and Tejón natives arrived with their captains at his camp on March 11. They were very docile and jovial. They demonstrated the union, agreement, and good nature in which they live with the Spaniards, but at the same time, they displayed great repugnance at the idea of gathering in a town and political life.

Notwithstanding this, they are sociable among themselves. According to these natives, the Cueroquemados are comprised of thirty families and the Tejón nation has fifty families.²⁷⁷

53. During his march to this Nueces River (which he performed with the most appropriate conduct) Captain Orobio y Bazterra suffered great toils due to rigorous thunderstorms, and snowstorms that mistreated people, livestock, and equipment, and later due to the lack of water that he experienced in the eight days he spent crossing the forty-six leagues that there are from the Arroyo Purísima Concepción (four leagues to the south of said Nueces River) to that of El Norte along the routes he traveled. In the referenced forty-six leagues, he found only a few *lagunas* and estuaries that were very salty and were gathering salt along the plains, and he was able to take enough fresh water for the people from some handmade wells the barbarous Indians made, and if he had not availed himself of palm roots and other fresh herbs that the country provided, his hardships would have been worse.

54. According to his diary, Captain Orobio y Bazterra notes there not being any suitable place for settlement from near the Nueces River to that of El Norte, principally due to

²⁷⁷ Joaquín Orobio y Bazterra, folios 46v31-46r7 of the draft manuscript published as José de Escandón, 1747, *Informe de Escandón: Para Reconocer, Pacificar y Poblar la Costa del Seno Mexicano* (Ciudad Victoria, Tamaulipas: Consejo Estatal para la Cultural y las Artes de Tamaulipas, 1998).

the lack of fresh water, but that decent watering holes could be constructed along the straight path in distinct places where he experienced that by digging into the earth a *bara* and a half deep plenty of water flows forth through good springs, coming from the San Antonio River. He walked from El Cántaro of the Río del Norte, and if when at the stopping place of San Francisco Javier, he had taken the southeasterly route (due to the insistence of the Indian guide who assured that said Río del Norte was still very far away) and he had followed the southern path that he was on, it arrives at the Río del Norte. A few leagues to the east of where I had kept my camp, and through that stopping place from the south to the north, Captain Orobio y Bazterra was unable to cross the forty-five leagues that there are from the Bahía del Espíritu Santo, especially since he did not know the way or crossing place at the *lagunas*, and the guide compelled the referenced captain on this occasion to make many deviations and travel in circles, which always happens to one who travels blindly. Before arriving, the Indians who gathered on the northern side had informed me that the guide who was with Captain Orobio y Bazterra was not very skilled, and although with all diligence I dispatched some more guides to reach him until he was already stopped in the referenced Cántaro Pass. He says in the eighteen leagues near said river there are plenty of hills, but they are not very high. The principal reason for his delay was the amount of snow that did not permit him to leave his presidio until the twenty-ninth of January, having designated the twentieth as the day he should depart, and another sixteen days were added to the delay due to the same storm delaying him near the San Antonio River. His troops were well armed, well equipped, and were provided with everything necessary, and having

rested and informing me of all that he had observed during his march, he returned to his presidio.

55. With all the diligences that seemed necessary to me for its complete exploration completed, on the banks and coast of the Río Grande del Norte, and with all the Indians of those nations presented with gifts, and advising them of the way in which they should notify me of what they needed in the meantime, Captain Orobio y Bazterra returned to arrange its settlement. On the third day of March in the morning, he sent Captain don Blas María de la Garza Falcón with the troops that accompanied him to the Cerralvo Presidio instructing them to re-examine various stopping places (which he did and of which he notified me), and fording the Río del Norte through the referenced Cántaro Pass, joining the referenced Captains of La Bahía and Coahuila, he gave them orders (which seemed convenient to me) to fulfill the duties of their positions and to return home. At seven in the morning, I headed back to the Conchas River Camp near the Salinas de la Barra, where I arrived on the forth of March, and I found it without anything special at all. As some Indians from those *rancherías*, who were totally unaware of the Río del Norte had accompanied me, and the case being the same with Captain Santiago and the rest of them who followed me with respect to this stopping place, they remain as they were previously in their belief that it is impossible to transit the river due to many *lagunas*, *salinas*, and lack of fresh water that they imagined. The pleasure and happiness that they showed each other while making an alliance among one another with the pretext of always remaining united with the Spaniards was great.

56. In the morning on the fifth day of March, mass was sung and that same afternoon Captain don Francisco de Barberena arrived at the camp with twenty-two soldiers leaving the rest of his company from Villa de Valles and that from the Valley of Maiz in the outskirts of the referenced Cerrito del Aire, as I had instructed him. Having completed the account of his journey, which was happy, despite his great delay caused primarily by the two thunderstorms, the troops rejoiced that the exploration of those unknown lands was complete. The soldiers told each other what they had observed and the easy routes that they had discovered for Huasteca, San Luis Potosi, the New Kingdom of Leon, the Province of Coahuila and Texas, wondering how that beautiful paradise had remained hidden from the Spaniards all those years.

57. This same day (March 5th), I dispatched the Sergeant Major don Antonio Ladrón de Guevara with his soldiers and friendly Indians of which I make mention in number 16 so that they could regain their strength at home, due to no longer being necessary. I did the same with the picket that don Philippe Tellez Girón directed, of which I make mention in number 8, charging them with various diligences that they should practice during their return for the complete discovery of the land and the Indians who inhabit it.

58. On the sixth I moved my camp to the Salinas de la Barra where I remained until the morning of the ninth as much to repeat the exploration of those large *lagunas* and the coast as for leaving the Indians who inhabit them well instructed and satisfied. Having left on the same day for the Cerrito del Aire (of which I make mention in number 14), I arrived on the eleventh day. In this stopping place I found the two companies from Villa

de Valles and the Valley of Maiz, whose officials and soldiers showed the greatest rejoicing for the care in which my long journey kept them.

59. On the twelfth of said month of March, having left the top of the expressed Cerro and some other hills in its proximity, with some officers and soldiers, I found that great river, which I mention in number 14, and I found it to have its current from west to east. It is about eighteen leagues long. It snakes between the skirt of the Cerro de Tamaulipa, the old one, which is located to the south of it, and a large ridge, which is found to the north of it, which protects the river from all winds for about fifteen leagues. The sea comes up through it, and when it is full, and it raises up a *bara* and a quarter to the end of the ridge. It has very good coves in which many boats could set anchor in its current. Its depth, which is observable at high tide, seems to be great. Its water is salty like that of the sea. In all the referenced fifteen leagues, many large fish that are the size of sharks, tuna, turtles, and other similar ones were seen there. Its entrance to the sea is through a high hill that appears to have been opened by hand, and as far as I could calculate, that stopping place or bay is more than 300 *baras* wide. It is found a little more than twenty-four and a half degrees, and at the southern part, said river forms an estuary or bay. All its land from the northern part to the sea is composed of large valleys suitable for all types of planting and the valleys have plentiful water for its irrigation from various watering holes and arroyos that fertilize it. Its temperament is moderate. There are many good bands of mesquite and similar trees and good grasslands of grama grass.

60. On the southern side (where there is a ford to the referenced fifteen leagues from the bay), the same occurs and it offers beautiful stopping places for large settlements and *haciendas* for planting and raising livestock. The wind blows to the south through the named Cerro de Tamaulipa out to the sea, and it comes out upon some beautiful plains toward Las Ruzias, Huasteca, and Tampico.

61. Large savins, some cedars, oaks, ash trees, and other trees are plentiful along its banks up to the *Sierra Gorda* or *Madre*, which is twenty-five to thirty leagues from where the El Pílon and Santa Engracia Rivers, which enter it, are born. The river's course is over flat ground without any slopes at all. For this reason, if sufficient depth is found along these banks, a great ship factory could be built, transporting wood through the water without more cost than cutting it, even from the referenced *Sierra Gorda* where there are plentiful red pines and evergreen oaks. Along that entire coast, dark pressed bitumen grow in large sheets, and they are used in the same way as is the material the pines of said *Sierra* produce when mixed with it.

62. All of the referenced qualities that join together in the land, the abundance of fish, the shape of the bay, the serenity and coverage of the bay, seemed to me to rightly deserve the name of the estuary of Nuevo Santander²⁷⁸ due to how similar it seems to Cantabría, my homeland.

63. Considering one of the points of most importance of the expedition being to determine the depth off that bank and the river, I wanted to attempt it by means of a raft,

²⁷⁸ The word *ría* meaning "narrow inlet, ford, or estuary," soon became *río*; thus the Río de las Palmas became the Río de Nuevo Santander, or simply Río de Santander, although the name of its principal branch, Río de la Purificación, often applied to the stream all the way to its mouth. Weddle, *French Thorn*, 387n.

but I realized that I would never be able to completely do it. The risk was to the swimmers who would have to guide it through sharks, the width of the bank, and the agonies that they suffered in the Río del Norte. I decided that it would be more convenient that a passing boat from Tampico, which is so close, would perform this diligence.

64. The Tamaulipa Cerro, which runs eighteen leagues from southeast to northeast, has its eastern point at a distance of sixteen leagues from the sea. It is about eight leagues across. All of its skirts are of low-lying hills, land with some stone, and bands of low thickets. In the middle a point or a block of white stone that is able to be seen from all sides rises up, and it is the same one that is seen from the sea. It is found to be encircled by flat land and to be travelable by foot, for which reason the conversions of the Indians who inhabit it and who only resist in the high lands and brushy crags will be very easy. Very abundant arroyos come forth from it on all sides, especially on the southern and eastern sides. They run through all its valleys and plains and fertilize and irrigate them. Throughout the southern and eastern part, there are many silver veins that, according to tradition, are of very high quality. This contributes to easy settlement, while at the same time making it indispensable to protect that pleasant coast from the crown's enemies who, introduced to it, will not find Spaniards, who are able to offer only the slightest resistance, until reaching this city (Querétaro). In all the skirts of this Cerro, various *rancherías* of Indians live, whose number I was unable to calculate, but I judge it to be beyond 1,800, from what I was able to gather from those who gathered. They are not

from the Janambre²⁷⁹ nation and each *ranchería* has its captain without another corporal or head. There are many apostates from Tampico, Huasteca, Río Verde, and the Kingdom of Leon among them, and they have safe refuge in their attacks, as is evidenced by none of the companies from those named jurisdictions who go out to explore their borders in a war party ever having arrived to that stopping place until this year. Among these *rancherías*, there are two that inhabit the eastern part, close to the estuary of Santander. The first is called Pasitas,²⁸⁰ who demonstrated great docility and affection for the Spaniards, and they are the only ones in the entire coast who grow corn. They live without harming anyone and they have huts where they normally live. The captain of the second, who are called Chapoteños, and some of his companions caught up with me at the Salinas de la Barra. He remained in my company for more than a month, serving as an interpreter and anything else he could offer. Upon saying goodbye, he offered that he, along with his people, was ready to gather on the banks of said estuary of Santander, and that to this end he would try to gather those who lived nearby, which persuaded me that he will do it, according to the repeated tests of his loyalty that I performed.

65. The referenced Captain don Juan Francisco de Barberena left Villa de Valles with his company and that of the Captain don Philippe de Apressa Moctezuma on the twentieth of January, and he walked to the north as I noted in number 12, continuing his march to the expressed eastern point of Tamaulipa, completely exploring all that

²⁷⁹ An Indian group of southwestern Tamaulipas. Salinas, *Indians of the Río Grande Delta*, 146.

²⁸⁰ This group was represented at Mission San Juan Capistrano de Suances northwest of Tampico in 1777. *Ibid.*, 35.

unknown territory, suffering the discomforts that he experienced, the general period of rainstorms that delayed him twenty-four days due to having gotten caught in unknown low ground, and due to the stock having been mistreated due to the hot earth. His delay was caused by not having left said Cerro del Aire where we were supposed to meet on the forth of February, which was the one where I arrived through the western side of the named Tamaulipa, and he was only able to reach it when I had already returned to the Río del Norte. From the expressed Villa de Valles to the estuary of Santander there are about fifty-four leagues. The first twenty-five are from said town of Tierra Caliente, and the other thirty are from the Tantoyuca River Pass. Said estuary has a good temperament; it has moderate waters for irrigation, firewood, trees, grass, and as much as is desired for settlement, especially from the stopping place that Captain Barberena named Arroyo del Cojo, which is found at the beginning of the named Cerro de Tamaulipa to the banks of the expressed estuary of Santander. Religious from Señor San Francisco from the Tampico jurisdiction founded the old mission San Buenaventura de Tamaulipa²⁸¹ there for the Olives Indians. It was uninhabited twenty-five years ago due to the attacks that the Janambre nation committed due to not having any Spanish settlers there able to defend it.

66. The Salinas de los Olives are found at a distance of seven leagues from said stopping place of the Arroyo del Cojo, along the coast. They are composed of seven *lagunas*, three large ones and four medium sized ones in which two large arroyos enter.

²⁸¹ This mission was founded in 1673. It became a town in 1752 and was named Nuestra Señora de Buenaventura. Leduc, *Diccionario*, 853-54.

They descend from a little *sierra*, which is on the northern side, and they have many savins and overgrown thickets along them. These *lagunas* join each other through various estuaries that there are, and when there are southeasterly winds, a great quantity of seawater enters the *lagunas* through the sand dunes. All four of the said *salinas* produce salt in abundance, and fish of all kinds abound in them.

67. Captain don Francisco de Sosa, who, as I noted in number 12, left the Tampico sandbar on the twentieth day of January with 160 soldiers (including the colonels). He marched following the northeasterly route, and on the twenty-eighth day of the same month on the eastern point of Tamaulipa, he joined the referenced Captain don Juan Francisco de Barberena in whose convoy he remained until reaching the named estuary of Nuevo Santander, where he returned for said Tampico sandbar on the twenty-fifth day of February, nearing the coast in order to leave it explored, as I ordered him. There are two stopping places that are very good for settlement on the route that this Captain followed from said Tampico sandbar until joining the referenced Barberena. They are the named San Joseph, which was a presidio, ten leagues from said sandbar, and four ahead of it is the named Metate Pass.²⁸² Both have decent water and in the last one much land could be irrigated.

68. With the valleys of the Cerrito del Aire and its voluminous river explored to my satisfaction, I decided to continue my march through the eastern point of said Cerrito de Tamaulipa down to the sea with the intent of registering all that terrain myself, even though the referenced captains from Villa de Valles and Tampico had already done it.

²⁸² Twenty-six miles northwest of Tampico. Salinas, *Indians of the Río Grande Delta*, 103.

However, I considered the exploration of the skirts of the *Sierra Gorda* and Tamaulipa, the one of the New Kingdom of Leon along the ridge of San Antonio de los Llanos, and the Vocas de Santa Engracia, Santa Rosa, those of Caballero and San Marcos up to El Jaumave to be more necessary. I decided along with the officials that the mentioned Captain don Juan Francisco de Barberena should return with his company along the first route in order to examine some areas with which he was still doubtful that had moved him during his return, and that I would take the last route. We left said stopping place with this intention on the thirteenth day of March, and on the eighteenth of the same month, I arrived at the new settlement of El Jaumave, with Captain don Juan Francisco de Barberena having done the same with his company at Villa de Valles on the twenty-fifth of said month of March.

69. The entire eastern frontier of the New Kingdom of Leon up to San Antonio de los Llanos, and from there following the skirts of the *Sierra Gorda* up to the Voca de Jaumave or Guadalupe Camp, of which I spoke in number 90 (which is where the Ruzias plains begin) are all admirable lands for all types of planting and grasslands, especially in front of the plateaus that they call Las Prietas. Between the Las Prietas plateaus and the ones of Voca de Caballero and San Marcos, that entire valley can be easily watered with the waters that come forth from Las Prietas, and the benefits that the abundant silver veins in the skirt of said *Sierra Gorda* make them desirable for settlement.

70. This terrain that is north of the Tampico sandbar runs through all the coast of the *Seno Mexicano* up to the Bahía del Espíritu Santo from close to twenty-three degrees latitude up to twenty-eight and a half. It has the jurisdictions of Tampico, Panuco,

Huasteca (with the head city being Villa de Valles), and Guadalupe at its southern part. To the west it has the New Kingdom of Leon and the Province of Coahuila, and to the north the Province of Texas or New Philippines that begins in the named presidio Bahía del Espíritu Santo, with a little more than one hundred leagues from south to north and fifty or sixty from east to west. Although the referenced Christian provinces encircle it, the barbarous and apostate Indians have practiced the most atrocious crimes in it without forgiving honor, lives, or *haciendas*, by burning and destroying entire towns. Having attempted to explore, pacify, and settle this land repeatedly for more than 150 years, Your Majesty's (may God protect you) Catholic zeal has freed this land to that effect, committing such important work for distinct subjects, who, in various times, have caused great expense to the royal *hacienda*. It had been so fruitless that they were not even able to penetrate it, and unable to perform this first part, which consisted of its complete exploration, the other two parts of its pacification and settlement remained unachievable. I find that all of the measures for its attainment were directed to the New Kingdom of Leon, perhaps because it was considered to be the most suitable for the undertaking due to its proximity, but as the lack of provisions are constant, and even more so the few settlers that it has, only a few campaigns with very few soldiers were conducted, and they were so poorly equipped that they determined it was necessary to return home after fifteen or a few more days. The barbarous Indians were so insolent that they boasted that the entire coast was impenetrable by the Spaniards, and it was the surest evasion they could have. In said Kingdom of Leon, in the referenced entries as well as in those that specific residents performed with the governor's license, there was the custom of

taking barbarous Indian men and women that the Spaniards captured to work for them or to sell them, and they killed the old ones because they considered them unless as slaves. In various *rancherías* the natives performed sorrowful demonstrations. This, combined with the Indians' suspicion that the Spaniards wanted to take them to the expressed kingdom to gather, removing them from their lands, has caused such hate to be engendered in said Indians that it makes me believe it will be very difficult to reduce them. According to the soldiers, even in increased numbers the desired pacification will never be achieved due to the Indians' memory of the repeated offenses the Spanish residents caused them with their theft, murders, and abuses.

71. The Province of Coahuila, due to being so distant, as well as for having few people, will never contribute much, especially for settlement, which is the primary reason to dominate the land, and that of Texas or the New Philippines, where scarcities are even greater, will contribute even less.

72. In the referenced southern borders of Tampico, Panuco, Villa de Valles, up to Guadalcazar and its range, there is such an abundance of people that only in these regions is able to remove enough people to populate the rest of the coast without them being missed. Many of them are inclined as much as for improving the land, which is totally lacking, as for acquiring their own lands. They are as gifted and skilled in entries and departures as they are predisposed to be nocturnal, which is necessary for dominating the Indians, and I judge these residents to be very suitable for this effect. An abundance of supplies can be driven with little cost for the first year, and those are the only stopping places from where they can be carried.

73. All that has been referred, the situations of the coast and its borders, which I knew at the time of creating a plan, made it necessary for me to implement it in the manner that I noted in the cited report from the fourth of December of the most recent past year of 1746, with the exception of the number of soldiers from Coahuila and the Kingdom of Leon, which seemed necessary to be fewer to me. The captains came out so punctually on the routes that I chose for them, that there was no difference in them, and the same would have occurred in the concordance of the terms and days that I designated for them if the general bad weather and difficult transit of some rivers and *lagunas* that, being unknown, had not delayed them.

74. The soldiers were generally well equipped, especially the officials. The conscientiousness with which the governors and mayors behaved greatly contributed to this, but as with the events that can occur, it was necessary to provide greater provisions at least of biscuits and meat. At my own cost, I had them produce and transport both in addition to that which was already supplied to said frontier, and everything that was expressed, as well as everything that was needed, was distributed from my quarters to everyone. The referenced provision that I brought at my expense for the religious and the officials, both high-ranking and not, who gathered and ate at my table were so abundant that there was enough remaining to distribute among them for their return trip home. This was especially true of the livestock that were left from those that I took with me for the trip. When I returned to the settlement of El Jaumave, after having traveled so far on such long journeys, the livestock were so fat that seeing them caused great admiration, which caused the people to want to come to discover the quality of the

grasslands of that coast. As there was an abundance of supplies and the transit was smooth and enjoyable, similarly-minded soldiers will serve without rations or salaries, not only being ready and obediently punctual for such work, but also wanting to do it, so much so that it seems the most toilsome fatigues would seem easy to bear.

75. Upon each of the companies departing from their respected jurisdictions, I prohibited any of the soldiers from harming the barbarous Indians in the slightest or from using weapons against them (with the exception of self-defense) or from removing any of them under penalty of death. Although the soldiers themselves regaled the Indians, as is customary (a point I have observed in the pacification of the *Sierra Gorda* to the greatest degree), on this expedition it was practiced to the utmost degree. One night when those apostates from the kingdom came upon a piquet of soldiers with horses, they shot so many arrows at them, killing two of the horses, but the soldiers defended themselves with shields without firing a single shot. I advised them of the good treatment and gifts with which they had to attract said Indians, and they behaved so well in this that they even shared the rations that were given to them for sustaining themselves. This liberality attracted the Indians so much that many of them continually followed us on our journey. In all of it, the smallest problem between soldiers and friendly Indians did not arise. Especially since it was such a long journey, the slightest unpleasantness, which normally happens with so many people of different temperaments, the repeated storms, and crossing the rivers, swamps, and *lagunas*, did not arise. Not one person even became sick, due to divine mercy that clearly and openly appeared to have manifested this distinguished work to be accepted.

76. Twenty leagues to the north of Tampico, as it enters the moderate zone, a beautiful, healthy, benign, temperament begins, for which reason no mosquitoes, chiggers, ticks, or other insects are found, causing one to judge the quality is unique in the coast of this kingdom, making that terrain more desirable.

77. One of the things that seemed indispensable for the expedition was one or two boats, so that with these following the coastline the troops could use them to ford and explore its rivers and coves. I wrote to the Mayor of Tantoyuca on the thirteenth of October of the past year, telling him to send them to me at my cost, and I also wrote to the Mayor of Guanchinago on the twenty-second of December. I repeated this various times without success, as they had written me that they had dispatched the boats, but it was never verified and what we missed due to lacking them is unimaginable, as neither troops were able to explore what is referred without them, nor were the boats able to arrive at this land without the coverage of the troops, due to the risk of the Indians. Any diligence that is repeated will be frustrated if the two parts do not collaborate, as has been verified on different occasions when various boats have set out to explore said coast, leaving Veracruz under Your Majesty's (may God keep you) order. If the expressed boats had come, the Nuevo Santander sandbar that forms the Nueces River and the entry of the San Antonio River in the Bahía del Espíritu Santo could have been forded, and there is no reason that it should remain unexplored along that side. By directing two pirogues, which were also destined to be used by the soldiers, through arms to the *lagunas* through the sandbars, the soldiers could have examined these with less work and better satisfaction for the Cerrito del Aire, as I expressed in number 63. I sent another letter to

the expressed mayors so that they would send a necessary boat with a seafaring crew and twenty-five soldiers at my expense so that I could use them. I ordered that upon leaving Tampico, they follow the coast to the expressed estuary of Nuevo Santander and entering it, they explore the fords and return advising me of what they found, but this never happened. According to my view, it should have been very easy; I made repeated insistences with which I asked for it to happen a long time ago, even after having arrived at this city. It turned out that the Mayor of Guachinago did not have any of his residents' boats in the ports of his jurisdiction due to their being in the ports of Veracruz, constantly having been there many times. The Mayor of Tantoyuca had prepared the sea captain's fleet to leave for the reasons I had requested. He was close to Panuco when a large current from the Moctezuma River overtook him and swept him into the Tampico sandbar, leaving his fleet so mistreated that it was unable to be repaired in fewer than three months, and the referenced sea captain wrote me the same. The lukewarm reaction both mayors had from the beginning with regards to dispatching the expressed boats had to do, it seems to me, with the fact that their fleets are ordinarily used for fishing. As they are not very skilled, they do not leave the coast, nor do they have the necessary equipment to prevent leaving it if any wind from land forces them out to sea, and seeing that from one day to the next the difficulties were mounting, I decided to suspend this diligence and instead to perform it when the new settlements are established, if Your Excellency believes it to be convenient.

78. Having achieved the referred ends, the very desired exploration and the continuing pacification and settlement, I will present with the candor and smoothness to which I am

accustomed to, what I am able to achieve and what I feel is most convenient, easy, and least costly for its attainment.

79. First, it is the most important and principal concern to encourage the frontier soldiers, assuring them that they will be supported in the enjoyment of military privileges that they are due, and that they will be attended to correspondingly, according to the services they performed, especially in the assignment of some of the lands that will be pacified. With all of this, as long as it is not harmful to the royal *hacienda*, not only will the referenced frontiers be secured, but Your Majesty will also achieve having the necessary soldiers for pacifying and settling that very important coast of which it is able to be said has been the waning of the Spanish nation, being in the shape in which it is found having been ignored for some many years, and what is contained in it being exposed to settlement by a foreign nation, and even worse with that great number of souls in the center of the kingdom being in tyrannical slavery to the devil.

80. Secondly, those who shall enter to settle should be given some form of help for the cost at once so they are able to move with ease and for the provision of supplies they will need for the first year that land is assigned, as well as decent water for themselves so that they settle down and plant seeds and raise livestock. The missionary ministers that have to be put there for the religious administration should be apostolic religious men due to the good example that they provide, and not requiring benefits. They do not take the Indians to the missions until they are well instructed, and once the Indians are subjected to sociable and political life, priests can be placed there. The settlements that are newly formed should remain totally independent from the frontier governors and

mayors. This is important because without it I feel it will be very difficult to acquire settlers. The cause for this is due to the slights and tyrannies that the soldiers experience from these officials, especially the Lieutenants, who have them buy *baras* of land only to steal the title to the land from them, and who trick the soldiers out of their goods by whatever means of obtaining them. These officials abused them, and it will be much more useful if the soldiers elect one of their own who they consider appropriate for a captain, who at the same time in military matters, exercises civil and criminal jurisdiction, as they do in the inland presidios. This captain would be subordinate only to the General Captaincy of Your Excellency, through a Lieutenant general who would run all the settlements to which end, one could cut a line from San Antonio de los Llanos to the settlement of the Llano de las Flores²⁸³ of which I will speak in number 92. With this, all that has been newly settled will be located to the eastern part of the *Sierra Gorda*, between it and the sea, and so that the service be punctual, useful, and in agreement, all the captains and corporals would be subordinate to the captain of the settlement that would be placed in the estuary of Nuevo Santander, as much for being located in the center of all of them as for considering it will soon be the largest and most populated, due to reasons that I noted in their respective place.

81. The third is that they do not create new presidios because the royal *hacienda* is unable to support the growing expenses they occasion, and because it is the surest means by populating it by bringing residents as these are the same frontiers. In general, these are good soldiers and they have to bring their families and goods and plant their own

²⁸³ Large plains south of the area where the San Juan and the Río Grande Rivers meet.

crops on their own land. This interest stimulates the defense of the country and under no condition will they abandon it. That is what experience has taught me in the eight settlements that I have founded in the *Sierra Gorda*, and especially in that of El Jaumave where barely four years ago it was founded with only twelve men who were driven out of the frontiers of the Blanco River by hunger and misery. With some of them working and with the others praying, even in the first year when they suffered so many toils, they finally dominated the Indians who are currently found gathered in a mission. The number of families of Spaniards and people of reason is more than seventy with such good labors, orchards, and livestock, that no amount of Indians seem enough to make them leave those commodities they possess as their own, produced by their own work. Those who dwell in presidios do not do it in that way, as they are only interested in the salary, and as such only in only a rare occurrence is a third of the satisfaction able to be found, due to the manner in which their captains behave and do not allow them to plant. There is nothing to protect them as in the rest of the presidios, nor do they love the country, nor do they attempt to attract families to it. This last point makes it more difficult, because in these presidios it is generally the captains who are the ones who control all the commerce in all types of businesses, such as seeds, and they do not like there to be any other stores or sown lands except for their own, which is where this bad treatment of the soldiers begins. The lack of commerce drives others out, which makes settlement impossible and perpetuates the necessities of maintaining the presidios. It is worth noting that they rarely have the Indian congregation prepared before hand, and due to this particular care, they keep them in barbarity as they judge them as the only

means by which their situations will remain, being so in contrary to the settlements that are made by residents that their first obligation is soliciting the Indians with gifts and entertainment in the interest that they not judge them, and they help them with their crops by which means they being to become familiar and accustomed to food, clothing, and rational treatment. Some soldiers will always be necessary, but only for the first two or three years that the campaign lasts, and their number will be so small that I will propose that the ones who are currently found in some of the stopping places will be enough to complete the settlement in those frontiers where they are already necessary.

82. It seems to me, the first and most important settlement²⁸⁴ should be placed at the head of the plains of the Ruzias, about two leagues to the southeast of the Voca del Jaumave on the banks of its river of which I speak in number 9, 10, and 11 in the first and second of my reports from the thirtieth of January of this year, and in the fifteenth and sixteenth of that one from the sixth of August of the most recent past year of 1744. It is said that a mission had been founded in this same spot, and a short distance away another one that was named San Buenaventura de Tamaulipa was also founded, but both were immediately destroyed. With the settlement composed of both Spaniards and people of reason, and built in such distances and proportions that it would have a straight road to the frontier settlements, both would be able to help each other with whatever urgency developed for the expressed settlement, as I noted in the referenced number sixteen from the sixth of August of 1744. Fifty-one families of Spaniards are needed, which are already prepared in the frontiers of Guadalcazar, El Pilón, Labradores, and the

²⁸⁴ This is the future site of Santa María de Llera. It was founded on December 25, 1748.

Blanco River, giving them necessary lands and water, 200 pesos to each one at one time, and 500 to the captain, which brings the number to 10,500 for their transportation, provision of supplies, weapons, munitions, and some equipment for working the land. This is a burden for which the costs will found to be very low, if one considers a comparison with the growing cost that bringing fifteen families of Islanders to San Antonio de Bexar, or the maintenance of a presidio as short-lived as it may be, occasions. This type of settler, herders who continually work, are much more suitable for the desired end when compared to the already referenced ones, and those who reside in the presidio, which I noted in number 81. The Indians from Monte Alverne and Santa Clara, who live at a distance of three to five leagues away, and of whom the principal ones accompanied me in the entire trip with great loyalty, are already prepared to gather in this settlement, and others can be acquired from some of the *rancherías* of Janambre who live on the skirts of the named Tamaulipa that falls on that side. This settlement will be located ten leagues to the east of that of El Jaumave from where soldiers as well as supplies for any emergency that arises can be provided in the beginning so that the mountain range up to Guadalcazar will be protected from enemies from behind. This settlement, very excellent sir, as it is already in the coastal plains, has to be the mother and shelter for all the rest as much for being situated in the road that has to bring them to her, as for being the necessary route through which one has to travel to the New Kingdom of Leon to Huasteca, as well as for the great quality of its lands, waters, benefits that it offers in the nearby *salinas* and coast, and the proximity of the frontier

towns. So many people will gather there within six years' time, I hope it to be a great place for commerce.

83. The second settlement can be placed in the stopping place of Nuestra Señora de la Soledad de Canoas.²⁸⁵ This is found in the *Sierra Gorda* to the east-north-east from the Mission of Tula in the Río Verde jurisdiction fourteen leagues, and about ten to the south of where the one for Las Ruzias should be placed, as it is a better road to it and the entire coast. It has beautiful lands for settlement due to its good temperament and enough water to irrigate a large valley that begins in it and extends to Villa de Valles twenty leagues to the southeast. It has plentiful wood, stone, and fish, and more than 200 families of Pisones Indians who live nearby can gather in this mission. They have offered to gather numerous times as have the twenty-two families of Mecos Indians who live in *rancherías* in the nearby stopping place of La Laxa, of which I spoke in number 17 in my referenced report from the thirtieth of July of 1744. The referenced Captain of Caballos Corazas, don Juan Francisco de Barberena, who is a very skilled soldier in those frontiers, a man of honor and truly full of zeal for the best service to both majesties, striving for the salvation of those souls in safeguarding the frontier from the continuous attacks that the referenced Indians undertook, attempted to attract the peaceful ones, requesting they gather to which end he placed ten families of people of reason from there along with Feliciano Rodríguez as their Corporal. He has liberally spent a quantity of pesos for various things that have occurred to sustain himself and

²⁸⁵ This is the future site of San Juan Bautista de Horcasitas founded on May 11, 1749. This is modern-day Magiscatzin. De la Garza Treviño, *Así Nació Tamaulipas*, 36.

some of the Indians who gathered, but with little effect because the Indians did not have a religious to instruct them or of whom to grow fond. The expressed families lamented the lack of a minister that they have been unable to acquire, and some of them left the settlement. Those who remain are sustained only by the hope that Your Excellency's benignity will be served by attending to that settlement with the care that I request, due to being the only settlement on that side in the center of the *Sierra Gorda*. Regarding being provided a religious, the expressed corporal appeared before the justice of Villa de Valles in March of the past year of 1746, to whom, as required, he responded that the jurisdiction of Tampico did not have the security that is required to place a religious there, and that he would do it as soon as it did, over which claim, having informed the General Captancy of Your Excellency in a decree of the eighteenth of May of said year of 1746 of the diligences through said justice, you ordered me to find out what is to be considered convenient regarding the matter.

84. This stopping place, sir, which I have re-baptized with the name Our Lady of Solitude, has always been known as San Joseph Tanguanchin, where a mission was founded by the Río Verde jurisdiction of the Province of Michoacán in the month of July of the year 1617. It remained populated very few days due to not having left a religious or having placed any residents or people of reason there. Under its title, up to today's date in the 130 years that have elapsed, the synod of 300 pesos each year has been charged for supporting the religious, as if one had been there, a point about which I speak in number 35 of my report from the thirtieth of July of 1744, and in number 9 of that of August 6th from the same year, demonstrating the just reason that there was to

suspend the payment of this and other idle synods, serving only to consume the royal *hacienda* without fruit, reserving to give this mission the destiny that seems appropriate to me on this occasion so that it become productive.

85. The stopping place of Nuestra Señora de la Soledad or San Joseph Tanguanchin is found outside the limits of the jurisdictions of Tampico and Río Verde and close to that of Las Ruzias and other stopping places where the new settlements should be placed, and the same road to its entry. For this reason it seems convenient to me that apostolic religious are placed in it, with which the settlement will remain in the care of the referenced don Juan Francisco de Barberena. Its establishment is sure in Indians and people of reason without it causing a new expense to the royal *hacienda*.

86. The third settlement²⁸⁶ is able to be placed in front of Mesas Prietas of which I spoke in number 62, along the same skirt of the *Sierra Gorda* where there are abundant silver veins and lead. Having discovered them and surveyed them, the referenced don Philippe Tellez Girón, Mayor from Labradores in the company of don Francisco de Zamora, a resident from San Antonio de los Llanos, and others from Mazapil²⁸⁷ and Matehuala,²⁸⁸ appeared offering to found the settlement at their own expense. They offered to direct families to it, and to add the barbarous Indians who live in that frontier of the Blanco River, Vocas de Caballero, Santa Engracia and San Marcos, with only the conditions that lands and waters be assigned to them for their administration of the people of reason and the Indians who would be reduced, that an apostolic religious be

²⁸⁶ This is the future site of Real de los Infantes founded on May 26, 1749 by Captain don Nicolas Antonio de Samaniego y Castillo. It is the site of modern-day Bustamante. *Ibid.*, 37.

²⁸⁷ Located in the Mexican state of Zacatecas. Leduc, *Diccionario*, 608.

²⁸⁸ Located in the Mexican state of San Luis Potosí. *Ibid.*, *Diccionario*, 601.

placed there, and that they give them six soldiers and a corporal for the first three years paid by Your Majesty, at which time the Indians will be subjugated and said settlement will have the security it needs. This is considered very important in order to dominate that fertile terrain, reduce its Indians, and facilitate settlement. That rich mineral's (silver) base, although it is not very extensive, offers much due to the abundance of metals and the low cost that its benefits offer. Because I will speak on the soldiers' points in a separate paragraph, I omit doing it here, adding that the abundance of metals is constant and has a competent source so that it offers much in the way of profitableness for its people, who, established in the first year are able to produce in the following years growing qualities in tithes from silver and create a large settlement there, with that stopping place assisting the passages to all the coastal plain that have heretofore been impeded by the barbarous Indians who live in that *Sierra Gorda*.

87. At about ten leagues to the northeast of Las Ruzias in a stopping place named Las Tetillas, of which I spoke in number 13, there are beautiful lands, decent water for irrigation, wood, stone, and as much as is needed for settling. Nearby there are various Indian *rancherías* in both the plains and the skirts of the nearby Tamaulipa, for which reason I judge it will be very suitable for a mission in this stopping place, as much for gathering the Indians from there as for securing the paths of those ahead. As the Las Ruzias and the *Sierra Gorda* mines are already founded, this one is located at a good distance from both, and they are able to assist them in whatever is needed. This is easy due to all the land that stretches between them, with the exception of some travelable hills and plateaus, being flat. Twenty-five families of Spaniards are enough for this

settlement²⁸⁹ and they can be assisted with the expense of only one hundred pesos for each one and 300 to the captain or corporal who has to go there.

88. At about fifteen leagues to the north of the *Sierra Gorda* Camp, and nine to the northeast of the expressed Tetillas, where the Pilón and Santa Engracia Rivers join, which are those that enter into the Nuevo Santander sandbar, at a distance of twenty leagues to the southeast of said sandbar, there is a very spacious valley of admirable lands for seeds and crops, an abundance of fish, stone, wood, and the ability to easily remove water for irrigation from the expressed rivers, whose stopping places I judge very suitable for a settlement²⁹⁰ in which two large *rancherías* of Indians who area at that stopping place could gather. It will also be convenient that it is settled, and in order to be attentive to the proximity of the previously mentioned ones, twenty-five families of Spaniards and people of reason with the assistance of a hundred pesos for each one and 300 for he who has to remain there as corporal or captain will be enough.

89. The sixth one²⁹¹ will be in the Valley of the Cerrito del Aire of which I spoke in numbers 14 and 58 through 64, six leagues to the northeast of Las Ajuntas, and I judge this one as one of the most necessary due to the admirable qualities of the stopping place and the great benefits that its settlement offers, as much for the safety of that Nuevo Santander sandbar as for hindering the communication of the barbarous and apostate Indians of the *Sierra Gorda* de Tamaulipa in the New Kingdom of Leon and that of the

²⁸⁹ Geographically, this settlement site corresponds to the future site of San Fernando de Güemes, which was founded on January 1, 1749, although Escandón notes in his Autos that the settlement from entry 87 was not founded during the preliminary colonization effort. José de Escandón, Autos, (AGN, PI), vol. 179, folios 304r-335v; 328r29-31.

²⁹⁰ This is the future site of San Antonio de Padilla founded on January 6, 1749.

²⁹¹ This is the future site of Burgos founded on February 20, 1749.

coast. Nearby there are various *rancherías* of barbarous Indians who, once calmed, it will be imperative that they gather there and do not leave. The abundance of fish and fruits of which they sustain themselves add to the excessive love they have for that area they call their homeland, and they are unaccustomed to leaving it. What they themselves have expressed to me is that they were prepared to gather as long as they were not removed from that land nor were their lands taken from them. For said settlement at least thirty-one families of Spaniards are needed, which I judge can be acquired with the assistance of one hundred pesos for each one, and 300 to he who would be corporal or captain of them, and planned this way, due to the admirable qualities that join in its terrain, within a few years it could be a large settlement of Indians as well as Spaniards.

90. The seventh²⁹² is able to be placed at a distance of six leagues to the northeast of the expressed one of the Cerrito del Aire in the eastern part of a large plateau that I mention in number 15, whose very fertile terrain, abundance of water, fish, salt, wood and good temperament invites its settlement. The 400 families, who are subjects of Captain Santiago, are able to gather here. He offered to be ready with them to do it. From what I understand, he will not fail in this due to seeing it as unnecessary to leave his land, and also due to not having any hills or rough place which they can strengthen themselves in that land or nearby it, and it seems to me that twenty-one families with the same expense of one hundred pesos to each one and 300 to the corporal or captain will suffice.

²⁹² Geographically, this site does not correspond to any of the settlements that Escandón founded in 1748-49; however, Santander was founded in the area.

91. The eighth²⁹³ can be placed in front of the Salinas de la Barra about twelve leagues to the north of the previously mentioned one, four leagues to the west of the *salinas* in the valley of which I spoke in number 20 that the hills form between the Sauz and Chorrera Arroyos. Water is able to be removed from these arroyos and from the Las Presas and the Conchas River, offering decent watering for all types of seeds, and as much extension as is desired for all types of livestock, large and small, an abundance of good grasslands and watering holes, and plenty of pine trees, evergreen oaks, and other types of trees. The 150 families of Pintos, Pamoranos, Quedexeños and Quiniquanos Indians, whose Captain is Marcos de Villanueva, and the 150 from the Comecrudo Nation, who are gathered with them and who are ready, as I noted in number 24, can gather here. The settlers are already found in this stopping place. There is commerce, made up primarily of the abundance of salt and fish, and it is very important that it be done in this way, due to being the necessary crossing place to the Bahía del Espíritu Santo as well as for removing the sacredness or evasion the apostates of said New Kingdom of Leon have in their attacks in those *lagunas*. I consider forty families of Spaniards necessary here, with the assistance of the expense of 150 pesos to each one, and 500 to he who will be captain, and it is necessary that he be a good soldier due to requiring much more care than in the previously mentioned places, due to the proximity of the *Sierra* and due to being the last one in that range, up to the Río del Norte, which is twenty-five leagues away, and it is necessary to secure the path.

²⁹³ Geographically, this site does not correspond to any of the settlements that Escandón founded in 1748-49. Reynosa was founded on the southern banks of the Río Grande. Escandón does not mention it geographically in his proposal of settlements in this manuscript.

92. The ninth settlement²⁹⁴ should be founded on the plains of Las Flores on the banks of the Río del Norte, on this southern side, two leagues from the stopping place where the San Juan River enters the Río del Norte, so that with great removal of water from it, which can be made in Azúcar Pass (of which I spoke in number 35), all those beautiful plains can be watered. The terrain itself is open and very fertile. It has abundant good grasslands, plenty of wood, fish in all the named rivers, salt in the nearby *salinas*, and on the northern side, there are plenty of wild cattle and horses, it has a good temperament, and it is a truly desirable place for settlement. It is located forty leagues from where said river enters the sea, and forty from the town and Presidio of Cerralvo. As I wrote in number 34, with this stopping place splitting the distance that there is from the uninhabited expressed coast to said Presidio of Cerralvo, a settlement seems necessary there, which adds to the inclination found in the soldiers and the rest of the those who accompanied Captain don Blas María de la Garza, as I noted in number 35.

93. In this settlement it will be necessary to place fifty families of Spaniards with the assistance of one hundred pesos for each one and 500 for the captain. There, by means of the expressed Indian Captain Santiago, Indians from the last *rancherías* that I express in number 37 and some from the ones I express in 38 can gather (as he tells me they are ready). Along the same bank of the river, downstream to the part where it meets up with the sea, another four to six missions can be founded there after the referred settlement is founded, as there are very suitable places. It is easy to remove water for irrigation, as I

²⁹⁴ This is the future site of Nuestra Señora de Santa Ana de Camargo founded on March 5, 1749.

said in the expressed number 34, by placing one of the settlements in the part where it is easiest to cross the river, a straight road to the Bahía del Espíritu Santo can be formed.

94. The tenth settlement²⁹⁵ can be founded on the bank of the Nueces River of which I spoke in numbers 19 and 50, about thirty leagues to the northeast of the previously mentioned one, and a little more than twenty from the Río del Norte, heading south from the stopping place where I had my camp that number 23 describes, and twenty-five leagues before the stopping place of Santa Dorotea that is to its north, as I note in number 46. Notwithstanding that it offers all types of commodities for its settlement in the way of seeds, grasslands, salt, fish, wood and stone, I consider this site on the Nueces River to be the most difficult to settle due to the great distance at which it is found from the Provinces of Coahuila and the New Kingdom of Leon. However, once the watering holes in the referenced thirty leagues that there are along the straight road to the referred new settlement of Azúcar Pass are built, which is very easy due to what I noted in number 34, and with Santa Dorotea settled, the families of barbarous Indians that the referenced number 50 expresses can be acquired and gathered, and if that large bay that was named San Miguel Archangel is found to be deep enough, some commerce can be built, which will greatly contribute to its settlement. This settlement needs fifty families of Spaniards with the cost of 200 pesos for each one and 500 for its captain so they can provide themselves with what is necessary and completely settle it.

²⁹⁵ This is the future site of Vedoya. It ended in failure.

95. The eleventh one²⁹⁶ can be placed near the San Antonio River in the stopping place Santa Dorotea of which I spoke in number 46, relocating the Presidio and Mission Bahía del Espíritu Santo there due to both being fruitless in the place where they are currently located for the reasons that I leave noted in number 44. This does not present any cost to the royal *hacienda* nor any grave thing to the missionaries and presidio dwellers due to the short distance and the weakness of the building material that they have there, and I am sure that in this way said religious and soldiers, as well as the few Indians that there are gathered there, will move with the greatest pleasure due to the little work it will cost them to relocate to better land. The safety and registry of the bay is the principal reason for the presidio remaining there, even though the one of Santa Dorotea is without comparison much better for this, and is much more suitable for this, due to the other one being located fourteen leagues away and Santa Dorotea is only six from it, and it is on the same side of the river where it can easily be reached often with a boat. With the presidio and mission in named site, the two *rancherías* of the Cujanes and Carancaguazes Indians, which I described in the referred number 46, are able to gather there with the 160 families that they have, and those from the place where the mission is currently located can also be added. This will create a decent gathering once the first harvest of corn, chilies, and beans are gathered, as it is difficult to transport them from other places due to the great distance. We should try to settle the nearby areas with Spanish settlers, assigning them lands and water, not only in Santa Dorotea, but also in the twenty-five leagues that there are to the south from this stopping place to the Nueces

²⁹⁶ This is the future site of Villa de Balmaceda. It also ended in failure.

River, which are fertile and have plenty of water as I expressed in number 48. With the garrison ceasing to continually occupy itself in bringing corn from the Río Grande from the Presidios of San Antonio and San Juan Bautista, they can attract and bring the Indians of those nearby areas, as it is very easy to do when there are supplies.

96. I feel that land should be given to these thirty-nine soldiers (including the sergeant) of this personnel so they can plant and raise their livestock, advising the captain that as long as there are no emergencies, they should be given time to do this, having them provide themselves with oxen, farming equipment, and some livestock from their own salaries, so that in three or four years they can be very rooted there, and the 15,845 pesos that Your Majesty spends annually in that presidio can be applied to the coast that runs up to the Mississippi River.

97. The twelfth settlement,²⁹⁷ it seems to me, should be founded in the stopping place named Monte Pass, fourteen leagues to the northwest of the Tampico sandbar, close to the one where the Presidio named San Joseph was previously; the greed of its subjects whose care it was under, forced the Indians to leave it. There are large valleys there and near it there are high hills with decent woods. The temperament is a little less hot than that of Tampico and it is of open rocky, ground with the exception of some marshes and crags that do not impede traveling over the land. A good arroyo runs through said valleys with which much land can be watered, and around it there are various estuaries and *lagunas* that offer great comfort for raising large and small livestock. The *salinas* they call Tampico are found at a short distance from this stopping place. They produce

²⁹⁷ This is the future site of Altamira founded on May 2, 1749.

little salt. At a distance of about twenty leagues away, those of Los Olives, which number 66 describes, are found. Many families from Panuco and Tampico are inclined to this settlement, due to having don Cayetano de Morales and his brothers and their *haciendas* called Chilla nearby with plenty of large livestock. This *hacienda* is currently uninhabited (due to the barbarous Indian attacks) and these families have offered not only to settle said *hacienda* in order to verify its usefulness, but also to aid it and assist it however they are able. The barbarous Indians named Anacanas and Pelones live in this stopping place as well as other *rancherías* that can be gathered there. This settlement needs fifty families of Spaniards with which I do not doubt the referenced stopping places of Panuco and Tampico can assist with the cost of one hundred pesos for each one at once, and 500 to he who will be captain. This settlement will end up being about six leagues from the sea, fourteen leagues (as I have said) to the northeast of the Tampico sandbar, and twelve to the northeast of Panuco, forming a triangle with the two, with respect to Las Ruzias, of which I spoke in number 82, twenty-five leagues more or less east to west, and as it has to be located on the other side of the river named Panuco, as there is no cover for its settlers to cover the terrain and provide assistance to the other new settlements. There is no doubt that with the cost of little work the total subjugation of the barbarous Indians that live in that land will be achieved, facilitating travel along the coast of the estuary of Nuevo Santander.

98. The thirteenth²⁹⁸ can be placed on the bank of the Arroyo del Cojo of which I spoke in number 65, about twelve leagues to the north-northwest of the previously mentioned one and fifteen to the southeast of the one of Las Ruzias. Said arroyo has enough water to irrigate the seven leagues to the north of it. There are various other arroyos and estuaries nearby that make the land fertile for planting and raising all types of livestock. There are plenty of trees, and this land enjoys a mild temperament due to being located along the eastern skirt of the Cerro de Tamaulipa as I expressed in number 65. Seven leagues to the eastern part of said stopping place, the large Salinas de los Olives, which I mentioned in number 66, are found near the coast. They have so much salt that they are able to greatly contribute to this place's commerce, and that of fishing also contributes to the comforts of those who will go settle this place. I judge fifty families of Spaniards are necessary for this settlement with the cost of one hundred pesos for each one of them and 500 for he who will be captain. The Aretines, Anaconas,²⁹⁹ Plagueques and many other Indians who live in the nearby *rancherías* of this named site can gather here. The mission that the referenced number 65 notes was here previously, and even today one hundred families of Olives Indians, Christians who left that mission when the barbarous Indians drove them out, remain in the outskirts of Villa de Valles and Tampico. Six of these accompanied me the entire time that my campaign lasted and they asked me to help them return to recover that town that they call their own, and as they are already

²⁹⁸ This is the future site of Santa Bárbara. Escandón founded this town on May 19, 1749. It is the site of modern-day Ocampo. See Ciro R. de la Garza Treviño, *Así nació Tamaulipas: La Epopeya Escondiana* (Ciudad Victoria, Tamaulipas, 1953), 37.

²⁹⁹ Members of this group were reported living temporarily at Mission San Juan Capistrano de Suances of Altamira twenty miles north of Tampico in 1752. Salinas, *Indians of the Río Grande Delta*, 103.

well instructed in the rudiments of Our Holy Faith and political sociable life, they can greatly assist in the referred settlement.

99. The fourteenth settlement³⁰⁰ should be founded on the southern bank of the estuary of Nuevo Santander, twenty-two leagues from the flat land and beautiful valleys to the north of the previous one of which I spoke in number fifteen and 52 through 64, near the mouth where it meets the sea and forms a swamp or cove that it forms on this side where there are beautiful stopping places due to its flat, fertile land and abundance of arroyos that descend from the nearby Sierra de Tamaulipa. Due to this, it is one of the most important settlements for the safety of that port and coast, and as it offers good, mild temperament, minerals and comforts that I mentioned, it will be a great place within few years. In number 77, I noted the reasons for which I did not discover the depth of the water off its sandbar, but even in this case, as its depth did not appear to be enough for war ships, it seems to be deep enough for smaller ones (according to what can be surmised), and trade can be established there, which is useful not only for the referred settlements, but also for the Provinces of Huasteca, San Luis Potosi, the New Kingdom of Leon, Coahuila and Texas or the New Philippines, due to being in the center of all of them, and not only at a small distance away, but also with great benefits of grasslands and water that ease the travels of the roads that should be followed. This settlement will be located eighteen leagues to the east of that one of the Cerrito del Aire that number 89 contains, and although it is a seaport, and the number of Indians that are found nearby is growing, it seems to need more families of Spaniards than the others. I judge fifty will

³⁰⁰ This is the future site of San Fernando founded March 19, 1749.

be sufficient with the help of one hundred pesos for each one, and 500 to he who will be captain, given that even before these families have finished settling there, many others will arrive due to the mines, salt, fish, and crops, and the population will increase greatly and the Pasistas Nation and that of the Chapoteños Indians, whose captain of the last one accompanied me for more than a month, as number 64 expressed, will also be added.

They will gather with great ease and they will aid the others who live dispersed in other *rancherías* in the skirts of the named Cerro de Tamaulipa, and along the sea's coast.

100. The referenced fourteen settlements (as is seen in the accompanying map) are situated in such a way that they dominate the entire coast up to the Bahía del Espíritu Santo, and if it were possible to found them all at once, it would greatly contribute to the spirit and safety of the settlers as well as to the pacification and gathering of the Indians.

The two that number 83 and 95 contain do not offer any cost to the royal *hacienda*. That of 86 has only that of six soldiers and a corporal for three years, and until the other eleven become stable, the expense of 58,300 pesos seems necessary to me, and this is worth the small cost that is usually meant for the settlers if they are able to properly attend to the profitableness of the work, and the profits it offers to the royal *hacienda*.

The number of souls that are gathering in the guild of Our Holy Mother Church will be strengthened for glory, removing them from the tyrannical slavery of the devil in which they have suffered up to this point. This is not an amount worthy of criticism, especially if it is compared to the large sums that were spent on other less important places, given that of any other regular presidio normally exceeds an even greater amount in two years, and the cost will eventually become nothing, given the probability that there is

(according to the practical experience that I have) that through the means that I leave noted, the success of this pacification that is so desired will be secured.

101. In my report from the twenty-third of February of the past year of 1743, I proposed the necessary reasons in number 4 of it for which I found to cease the synod that up to this point the religious of Señor Santo Domingo had received for administration of the Mission Santo Domingo Soriano of this jurisdiction. It was ordered by the General Captaincy of Your Excellency in a decree from the twenty-fourth of May of said year that it be that way, and in those from the thirtieth of July and the sixth of August from that of 1744, I leave evidence (notifying what I saw in the Río Verde jurisdiction) that the synods that were being paid for eleven of the missions should also be stopped in some of them due to having excessive benefits for supporting the religious, and in the others because there have never been any religious there nor do said missions even exist. In number 2 of my report from the twenty-fourth of July of 1746, I noted the reasons why the synods of the six missions of the San Salvador de Tampico jurisdiction named there should also be stopped. They already require parish priests as they are made up of eighteen to which eight can be added from the ones that should be ceased from the seventeen that Your Majesty pays to the Provinces of Guadalajara and Zacatecas in the New Kingdom of Leon and the Province of Coahuila due to not having Indians to administer in the stopping places for which they were destined. These twenty-six synods and the two from the Mission of the Bahía del Espíritu Santo can be relocated to the presidio at the referenced stopping place of Santa Dorotea. There is a sufficient number of religious for the fourteen settlements that I have noted without causing a new burden

to the royal *hacienda* to maintain them, or any other thing they shall need with due prudence due to not spending money wastefully where it is not necessary, and it can be applied to the places that require it so that Your Majesty's mind is fulfilled in the propagation of Our Holy Catholic Faith, so supported by your Christian zeal. On the contrary, said synods have continued unceasingly where there is no necessity for them, and they make the continuation of the reduction of the Indians impossible even if they pretend to advance it in any other way.

102. In the beginning in the referenced fourteen settlements the settlers who must serve as soldiers in them need to attract workers and farmers in order to properly settle them, and at the same time there should be a continual attendance to the defense of their livestock and the congregation of Indians, which will not leave them time to undertake campaigns and maintain the roads between the settlements with the security it requires. Therefore some soldiers, as I noted in number 81, are necessary, and due to the consideration of not increasing the cost to the royal *hacienda* to more than it already is, I will propose the way in which this necessity can be achieved without a new burden.

103. The Mayors of Tantoyuca, Panuco, and Tampico are paid 800 pesos annually as military captains. This is needless, especially once it can be verified that the settlement of Metate Pass, which number 97 contains, will need to be on the frontier. In addition to this, 1,600 are paid to four soldiers who should maintain Tampico, which compose the amount of 2,400 pesos with which a squad of nine soldiers can be developed, providing each one a salary of 225 pesos, which is a decent garrison together with the settlers for the referenced settlement of Metate Pass, and the campaign could be continued up to the

Arroyo del Cojo, which number 98 expresses, and up to Tampico and Panuco, with the help of those militias. This salary, although it seems low, is very decent and it will be appreciated if it is given to them in cash, due to what I will explain ahead.

104. The Cerralvo squad, which is made up of a captain, a corporal, and eleven soldiers is no longer needed in that stopping place. It can be placed in that one of the Llano de las Flores on the bank of the Río del Norte, which number 92 expresses. Captain don Blas María de la Garza, its Captain, shall remain as such, not only of his referenced squad, but also of the fifty soldiers who have to settle that place and the Indians who gather there along the southern banks all the way to the sea.

105. The Presidio named Bahía del Espíritu Santo is comprised of forty-one sites, and it is a sufficient place for the settlement of the Nueces River, which number 94 expresses, and it has to be moved to the settlement of Santa Dorotea of which I spoke in number 95. This will assist this settlement and allow the campaign to extend up to the settlement of Llano de las Flores, assisting the captain of it.

106. The squad from the Voca de Leones, which is comprised of seven soldiers and a corporal, has not existed for some years in this area. Due to this, it is no longer necessary in that place for which reason the 2,935 pesos that are annually paid to it can be stopped. A squad of eleven soldiers with the salary of 225 pesos to each one and a captain with 460 pesos that at the same time can be paid to the fifty families of Spaniards that have to gather in Las Ruzias, of which I spoke in number 82. This will be a sufficiently sized garrison in order to safely maintain the roads to Nuestra Señora de la

Soledad, the Canoas, Tanguanchin, Metate Pass, Arroyo del Cojo, Tetillas, and the *Sierra Gorda* Camp in front of Mesas Prietas.

107. Among the twenty-one presidios that there are in the internal provinces, with the exception of Cerralvo and Boca de Leones, I am informed that there are some that are no longer necessary. One of these is that of Sacramento, due to already having a decent amount of Spanish residents there and so many people of reason that they are sufficient to maintain it. They are stimulated by the fertility of the terrain and the crops they have planted in it. If Your Majesty sees it as convenient, he will serve himself by applying these or equal personnel to the other remaining eight settlements that the numbers 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 98 and 99 contain. These settlements will remain well staffed, and as the ones who will be applied to it are from the referred Presidio de Sacramento, I feel that the soldiers will be open to reform, proposing to give lands to those who want to stay there as settlers, and they will attend to it as such for which reason it is sure to be the result, according to what I am understanding through the relationship that the residents have among themselves that the majority of them will stay. With this, the number of residents will increase, and those who want to come with their captain to the coast with the salary of 225 pesos each can come with him.

108. With the 20,665 pesos that are paid annually to this presidio, eighty soldiers can be raised with the salary of 225 pesos for each one, which brings the amount to 18,000 pesos, and this is sufficient for the captain and corporals who will direct them. The distribution of said eighty soldiers shall be as follows: seven in the camp of the *Sierra Gorda* mines that number 86 contains, seven in the settlement of Tetillas that number 87

expresses, eight in Ajuntas of which I speak in number 88, twelve in the Cerrito del Aire from number 89, eight in that one to the east of the plateau of Nuestra Señora de las Caldas, from number 90, twelve in that one that will be founded in front of the Salinas de la Barra from number 91, eleven in the one of El Cojo Pass, from number 98, and fifteen in the one on the bank of the estuary of Nuevo Santander, which is the one of which I speak in number 99. In this way all the settlements are not only staffed, but they are left in such a way that there is no stopping place where the Indians can overtake them, as the referenced soldiers will be in a position to assist one and other. The door to apostasy and impetuosity to which the Indians are generally inclined will be closed. When the reordering of the settlements occurs, land and water can be assigned to the expressed soldiers in the places of their residences with which they will be assured when settling there.

109. I suspect that the thirty-five soldiers from number 103, 104, and 105 and the eighty and their corporals that number 107 contains will remain assigned to their respective settlements due to the qualities of the land and their proximity to the nearby populated frontiers. All of these settlements, or the greater part of them, will be able to be reformed within three years, and I suspect that the majority of the soldiers will remain there. At the same time, it can be arranged so that the settlement can occur along the coast that runs from the referenced Bahía del Espíritu Santo up to the Mississippi River so that the risk to which it is currently exposed by the enemies of the crown can be remedied in that way.

110. So that what has been related take effect, it is necessary that the corporals, as well as soldiers, under whose care the settlements should be placed be skilled, respectful men who are zealous for the best service to God and king, and above all, they must watch over them and protect them with the greatest vigilance and they must severely punish he who does not fulfill that which is his obligation. One of the main reasons for which so many internal presidios seem of little or no benefit to me is due to the way in which the majority of captains pay the soldiers. The soldiers assure me that the captains charge them through titles of collection and transportation, and they are accustomed to taking a third of their salaries from them, and sometimes the other two thirds as well. The captains usually tell the soldiers that they do not need the money, nor is it useful to them, and the soldiers are in such a position that rarely can they verify having received a third of the amount to which they are entitled, which Your Majesty punctually pays them. Beyond this, a soldier told me that his captain owed him 2,500 pesos worth of salary that he had never been paid. The captain informed me that it had been two years since his provider has sent him the funds, which demonstrates the dependence that the captain has on him. To remove this abuse and harmful thievery, it will be very useful if the sovereignty of Your Excellency avails himself (provided the proposed settlements take effect) by ordering each corporal and soldier be paid in cash on the table in his own hand in the same settlement as his residence, so that he can buy whatever he needs at will, and with the money remaining there, commerce will be strengthened among its settlers. Further, having all the money at once, the assigned 225 pesos will be more appreciated than if they were 400, given the satisfaction in the way, as I have expressed, they are

accustomed to receiving them. Among the subjects who I consider appropriate to serve as corporals and captains of the referenced settlements, the main ones are: the Sergeant Major of the frontiers of the New Kingdom of Leon, don Antonio Ladrón de Guevara; don Philippe Tellez Girón, Mayor of what used to be the town of Labradores; the Militia Captain don Nicolas Merino, a resident from Pílon Valley; the Captain of Caballos Corazas, from the Tula and Guadalcazar company, don Antonio Fernández de Acuña, and the Captain don Blas María de la Garza Falcón who is from the Cerralvo Presidio. These men not only served with honor and determination in this expedition, but they have demonstrated to be truly dedicated to settlement as soon as their troops are large enough. Each already has a good number of families prepared to this end, according to what they have just told me.

111. Once the expressed fourteen settlements are founded, the *Sierra Gorda* range, and the nearby one of Tamaulipa, which run almost exactly north to south, will be between them and the New Kingdom of Leon. These places have been the asylum and sacred places of the apostates of the New Kingdom of Leon who, deserting their missions and towns, have wandered in these parts for many years, eating what they steal and performing the worst attacks, killings, and atrocities. The continual campaigns that the frontier dwellers undertake against them from all the frontiers have not been sufficient to subjugate and contain them. The most favorable thing that results from these campaigns is offering peace to them under the condition that they remain in that barbarous life, which is the only thing that can be maintained in the interim. They achieved being good shots, and even when the soldiers came, they found safety in the ruggedness of the

Sierra as they withdrew to the coast, each time becoming more insolent. Said kingdom has been placed in such consternation, as much for the continual thefts that they perform on their neighbors, as for the many killings they annually perform there, taking entire families and preventing the sheep from entering the fertile grounds to graze, except with obvious risk to the shepherds and stock, or with such large squads that the expense becomes unbearable.

112. To remedy this damage, many steps that have been very expensive for the royal *hacienda* have been provided to this region by Your Majesty's orders, accords, consultations, and *juntas de guerra*, as is evidenced by the growing number of reports on this topic that are in process in the General Captaincies of Your Excellency. However, this has been so fruitless that, as desertion grows, one is hardly able to say that any Indians remain in the missions and towns of the referenced kingdom, and as far as I know, nothing except founding settlements there will be sufficient to subjugate them. At the same time, this will free the area with better security as they will be in the middle of them, and those of the named New Kingdom. There will be open roads, frequented by soldiers going to these destinations, and without the asylum of the coast, it is not only indispensable that the Indians become peaceful, but that they also lose hope of a new revolt. In this way it is seen that only with the warning that I gave them that if they do not gather in towns and missions, they will be treated as apostates, and enemies of the crown. Not only have they remained without harming anyone, but also many of them have come to me asking me to found a settlement for them, assuring me they will remain in it.

113. These Indians, very excellent sir, are so few in number that I doubt that they currently exceed 400 families because with their brutal life and continual drunkenness, they have killed each other. This is very common due to fighting over what they have stolen, and taking each others' women. The majority of them, or almost all of them, are Christians and Ladinos in the Castilian language. They take to this idle lifestyle as bandits to live in freedom, causing the *hacienda* owners of the entire frontier to tolerate such ignominious pensions, as they do not want to desert the country if possible, and suffer. They never, or hardly ever, live in a settlement or at any stopping places. They are divided into small groups that they call nations or *rancherías* and they generally live as each others enemies, a point that generally contributes to the ease with which they capture those who leave the settlement, which adds to all the coastal gentile nations having a natural aversion to said apostates, given that they are very bad, and it would be convenient to do away with them, which it seems to me that the gentile Indians would help do if necessary, but being as they are, and understanding this resolution, I doubt it will take place. They so desire it to be so that they have not attempted resistance, primarily occasioned by the many soldiers that they observed that are under my command, and that we have penetrated their land with all the entries and departures, as they founded their best defense in ignorance.

114. For the ecclesiastic administration of the new referred settlements, I see it as convenient that religious from the apostolic colleges of San Fernando of this court, and Our Lady of Guadalupe de Zacatecas be assigned to the settlements. The first group to the settlement up to the plateau of Our Señora de las Caldas of which I spoke in number

90, and the second group from that one up to the Bahía del Espíritu Santo. Practical knowledge moves me to this. Said apostolic men have dedicated themselves to the painful toils that these new conversions require. The attention with which they administer what is necessary, and the alms that are requested from Christian piety on the part of those colleges, and how they are able to feed and cloth the neophytes is a very essential part that I consider as one of the most necessary for the reduction as I diffusely explained in my previous reports. Among the referenced settlements, I do not make assignments for the Apostolic College of Santa Cruz from this city due to currently finding themselves in charge of the pacification and congregation of the Indians of the stopping place named San Javier, about 70 leagues distant to the north of the Bahía del Espíritu Santo, a project that helps that of the coast which, once achieved, will serve to contain the Apache Nation, who until a few years ago, have been able to enter up to that region.

115. The very reverend Father Fray Joseph Ortes de Velasco, commissary of the missions, of whom I spoke in number 2, accompanied me the entire expedition, and his tireless zeal, truly apostolic, and his good example greatly contributed to the circumspection of the troops and docility that I have noted. The gentile Indians demonstrated being so inclined that they asked me to send these fathers to their settlements, and the attendance of his fatherhood was also great relief and consolation for me, due to the satisfaction with which I left the camp in his care on the many occasions that were necessary for me to leave it, because with his great skill and talent, he was composed like an iris when he dealt with the difficulties that occurred.

116. As I noted in number 68, I returned on the thirteenth of March to the referenced new settlement of El Jaumave so that the settlement could be finalized. I gave various providences, assigning land and water to the Spanish settlers, whose number was very large, and to the Indians of the nearby mission of which I will advise the sovereignty of Your Excellency in a separate logbook.

117. From there, I marched to the Tula mission of which I spoke in number 5 and 6, and with the necessary providences given there as well, I dismissed the companies from Guadalcazar and the Valley of Maiz, who I thanked in the royal name of Your Majesty for the conscientiousness with which they had behaved. I continued to Querétaro with the picket from a regiment of it, where I arrived on the sixth of April, having traveled more than 500 leagues (there and back) according to the journeys that were made, excluding the many that were traveled for various discoveries that were necessary to perform in each one of the stopping places where dwellings were formed during the journey.

118. The Captain of this regiment, don Joseph Diaz Maldonado, as I expressed in the named number 2, accompanied me the entire time that the campaign lasted at his own expense with a picket of two Sergeants and ten soldiers from his company, and with the obligation and conscientiousness that I have noted in my previous reports. He has done this in all the entries and expeditions that have been conducted in the twenty-five years in this area of the *Sierra Gorda* and its borders, and he is very skilled. In similar expeditions, he has been valuable, affable, and he has an extreme desire for the conversion of the Indians and for the service to both majesties, for which reasons I

consider him worthy of Your Excellency's benignity, who might serve himself by thanking him, and also placing his worth in Your Majesty's royal news, as it is ordered in a decree from the thirteenth of January of the most recent past year of 1745 for the due credence of your sovereign graciousness.

119. All that I have noted from my own examination and view (which is the best) will always be found to be without variation, and I am persuaded that the same will be true of the explorations of the various officials who I selected for that end, due to my having performed exact diligences that support the reports that they wrote. When I received them, I examined not only the officials, but also the soldiers and barbarous Indians, demarcating the routes and everything else that they performed in order to ensure it without a doubt, for which reason I traveled such long journeys accompanied by some escorts. This, very excellent sir, is the most precise and succinct report I am able to provide to the sovereign comprehension of Your Excellency, which I have performed in virtue of your superior order, and the means that I propose for the pacification and settlement of the extensive fertile coast of the *Seno Mexicano*, undiscovered until now, are the most appropriate (according to the experience I have) for the reduction of the multitude of souls that inhabit it. If divine piety concedes the glory of its conclusion to me during the happy time of Your Excellency's government, I will add to it that of happily sacrificing as many risks, toils, painful fatigues, and growing expenses I have endured and experienced in the more than twenty-seven years that I have served Your Majesty (may God keep you) not only with myself but also with the troops at my expense and without any salary, who have accompanied me without the least burden to

the royal *hacienda* as much as in the various entries that have been performed for the pacification of these frontiers and the *Sierra Gorda* as in the current expedition, omitting many other things in order to not make the note extensive so as not to bother Your Excellency's superior attention. However, if there is any doubt about any of the referred points, I will provide the most punctual explanation as possible, if it is Your Excellency's wish, and you order me to do it. Your Excellency will be in command of everything, which I will esteem to the highest degree, as it will always be the best thing.

Querétaro October 26, 1747

Joseph de Escandón

rubric

CHAPTER V
AN ACCOUNT OF THE PRELIMINARY COLONIZATION OF NUEVO
SANTANDER

Two contemporary sources document the preliminary colonization efforts implemented in Nuevo Santander under José de Escandón from 1748-49. The first is a series of reports that Colonel José de Escandón wrote to the Viceroy Francisco de Güemes y Horcasitas known as Escandón's *Autos*.³⁰¹ The second source is Friar Simón del Hierro's diary.³⁰² Friar Simón del Hierro was a father from the Apostolic College of Zacatecas who accompanied Escandón for the majority of the colonization effort. In this chapter, I present the first English-language synthesis of both sources documenting the preliminary colonization of the province of Nuevo Santander, 1748-49.

In Escandón's *Autos*, he documents the founding of the civilian settlements that he personally oversaw, including: Santa María de Llera, San Francisco de Güemes, San Antonio de Padilla, Santander, Camargo, Reynosa, Vedoya, and San Fernando, describing the physical location of each settlement. Escandón also documents the founding of settlements overseen by captains serving under him, including: Burgos, Altamira, Santa Bárbara, Horcasitas, Valmaceda, and the Real de los Infantes. He takes great care to detail the geographical surroundings of each site, and the reasons that each site was suitable for settlement. Of particular importance were the fertility of the terrain and easy access to water sources for raising livestock or crops. It was also important that

³⁰¹ José de Escandón, *Autos*, (AGN, PI), vol. 179, folios 304r-335v.

³⁰² Simón del Hierro, *Diario que Hizo el Padre Fray Simón del Yerro en el Seno Mexicano, Año de 1749* (AGN, México, Historia,) vol. 29, folios 209r-231v.

the area be attractive to settlers. Escandón also details the number of settlers, soldiers, and natives who would reside in each settlement, and includes his expectations for their growth and development.

It should be noted that the two planned settlements of Vedoya and Balmaceda both ended in failure due a lack of easy access to watering sources, and due to their isolation from the rest of the settlements in Nuevo Santander. These were planned to be on the northernmost boundary of the province, but neither survived beyond initial attempts at settlement.

In his description of the founding of the settlements, Escandón includes his strategy behind each of their locations. As detailed in his *Informe*, Escandón planned to found the settlements in the middle of the rebellious natives, as he felt this would isolate various tribes and prevent them from forming alliances against the Spaniards. The majority of the settlements were also located within a relatively close proximity of another so that colonists would be able to assist one another with whatever crisis arose.

Although Escandón has been criticized for failing to include the natives in his colonization plan, he did take them into consideration when determining settlement sites. In the founding of Reynosa, Escandón notes that it seemed necessary to him to place this settlement in this stopping place due to the many natives that there are from the Río del Norte up to the sea (which is twenty-five leagues of open, flat land away), and as they said they this was the only place they would gather.³⁰³ Escandón frequently mentions his plans for founding native missions near the civilian settlement sites. However, due

³⁰³ Escandón, Autos, folio 322v12-16.

to the fact that he postponed founding the missions for a later “more opportune time” on various occasions for various reasons, it seems that he was only paying lip service to the notion of including the natives of the *Seno Mexicano* in his colonization plan for Nuevo Santander.

In Escandón’s documentation of the interaction between the new colonists and the natives in the region in his *Autos*, he is careful to describe it as mostly peaceful. In fact, he writes that the natives are peaceful on many occasions. Escandón does describe some of the violent interactions between the Spaniards and the natives, but he does not provide great detail. In one particular incident, in which the action lasted for two days, Escandón briefly summarizes the event as follows: I will return to Llera in order to punish a *ranchería* of natives, who, due to the oversight of a sheppard of sheep, killed a settler and drove others away.³⁰⁴ Friar Hierro provides extensive detail regarding this incident. He notes:

mail arrived from Llera in which Captain Escajadillo advised some Janambre natives had taken 3,000 sheep from the Carmelite Fathers’ *ranchería* and they had killed the sheppard, for which reason the steward asked for assistance, and he gave him some settlers, soldiers, and natives, and they followed the natives, and they not only took away the sheep, but they also killed the steward and a soldier from the settlement, and many of them fled. Finally realizing the danger, those who went after them fled to safety, and they left a small stone mortar that a soldier was carrying in the field. The natives took the two heads, and the bodies of the three dead men: sheppard, steward, and soldier remained there. It was planned to attack them here, for which reason the settlers from San Francisco de Güemes were readied, and he wanted to add one hundred soldiers from these settlements with the friendly natives from his settlement, and those from El Jaumave, where they had already been notified. Escajadillo also advised Captain Guevara

³⁰⁴ Ibid., folio 335v13-17.

from Santander and Captain Paz from Padilla who were on a campaign on the other side of the river due to the natives having shot some arrows at some livestock. Of these it was known that Captain Guevara removed 100 sheep from them and the Toro natives overtook him from where they have their *ranchería* close to the Juntas, and Captain Paz was injured. At this same time, two soldiers, who were on horseback, reached the colonel . . . it was decided that these fifty soldiers and another fifty that had joined the soldiers and settlers from Horcasitas would go attack the Janambres . . . Captain Berberena was the primary captain, and a native was his guide. They attacked them at dawn, and they were caught sleeping. They killed four of them, and the rest fled. They took back the horses the natives had taken from the soldiers, and another ten horses, seeing they were lost. They went into the river, and from the other banks some natives were yelling to another native captain they knew, and they threatened to burn his village, and that as soon as they entered the water, they should attack the soldiers and that they would begin killing the soldiers little by little, and they would save them, because they would be unable to cross the river. Our soldiers returned to Horcasitas. Captain Escajadillo was to attack the ones who were in the pasture lands of Castrejón on the other side, but the plan was frustrated because the friendly native who was his guide and who he trusted informed the natives when he was not watching him, and they began to shoot arrows. This native man and two others are headed to Querétaro to purge their sins.³⁰⁵

The utility of including Friar Hierro's diary in an analysis of the colonization of the province of Nuevo Santander is evident from his description of this incident. Readers gain valuable information regarding the incident and the interaction between the Spanish and the natives during the colonization process that Escandón omits in his *Autos*.

Friar Hierro also details native customs that Escandón omits from his reports. In one interaction in which the Spaniards and Comecrudo tribe had gathered, there was

³⁰⁵ Hierro, Diario folios 228r1-229r20.

some distrust among both parties, but after each group saw that neither wanted to harm the other, demonstrations of peace were performed. Hierro notes:

The most important of these natives, who was their captain, asked for a small cup of water, and beginning with the colonel, he began washing the hands of all the captains and chiefs who were seated at the table, and next, gracefully removing the piece of cloth that covered his legs, he took it and began washing their hands as a symbol of peace, and he also washed and cleaned the top part of the father's head.³⁰⁶

Escandón rarely describes any of the natives' customs, except for of what their diets consisted and the manner in which they dressed.

Hierro also notes the natives displayed dissention, which Escandón fails to mention in his reports. Specifically, Hierro notes problems with Captain Santiago, the chief of the Comecrudo nation, with whom Escandón had numerous interactions during the expedition. Hierro notes, "Captain Santiago is so spirited that on the first expedition that the colonel made, having even more soldiers than on this one, he displayed a very poor disposition and through another ladino native, he had him ask for what reason he should give them his land, and advised that he was also a captain."³⁰⁷

Friar Hierro also highlights some of the issues that Escandón faced during the preliminary colonization of Nuevo Santander. For example, when commenting on Escandón's attempt to locate a port in the region, he notes:

they did not find the port for which they were searching,
for which reason the settlers returned very disheartened

³⁰⁶ Ibid., folio 212r11-21.

³⁰⁷ Ibid., folio 221v6-11.

and even more so the colonel, who was unable to disguise his feelings. For some days he ate poorly and he even became ill, perhaps from sadness, because he had promised with certainty he would be able to find the port and they were awaiting the news in Mexico for hours that he had found it.³⁰⁸

Escandón's failure to establish a port in the newly colonized coastal region (Figure 2) was one of the reasons for which he was brought up on charges of poor administration in later years.³⁰⁹

Another issue that Escandón faced upon which Hierro comments is the lack of water in the region. For example, when detailing the founding of Reynosa, Hierro notes:

[this] project and plan failed, because with his people gathered to settle near the *laguna*, they found it to be completely dry, for which reason they found it necessary to found the settlement on the same bank of the Río Grande. I am unaware of the state of this settlement because hardly a goat ranch could be placed there, and they would likely die due to the land being so loose, and even more so due to the general overuse of water. Any settlement will require much work, and unless it is directly upon the riverbank, it is unable to be very near it.³¹⁰

This varies from Escandón's description of this event. Escandón, on the contrary, notes:

I founded the town of Reynosa in honor of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe on good land with plentiful wood, firewood, and lands appropriate for raising crops and pasturage and the likelihood of removing water for irrigation from the

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, folios 212v17-213r2.

³⁰⁹ Cf. Patricia Osante, *Testimonio Acerca de la Causa Formada en la Colonia del Nuevo Santander al Coronel don José de Escandón: Estudio Preliminar, Transcripción y Notas*, (Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de México, 2000), p. 12.

³¹⁰ Hierro, *Diario*, folios 219r24-219v8.

same Río del Norte through a tributary that is formed in a high part, and it is suitable to that end.³¹¹

There are many instances in which the version of events that Escandón and Friar Hierro present vary. Inclusion of Friar Hierro's diary in an account of the preliminary colonization of Nuevo Santander is crucial in order to obtain a more complete representation of the events that occurred between December 1748 and May 1749. Due to the fact neither author wrote a day by day account of the events that they witnessed in their respective reports and diary, it is difficult to create an entry by entry comparison of these sources. What follows is a chronological synthesis of the two sources. I use Escandón's *Autos* as the foundation for the account and include corresponding information from Hierro's diary in order to complete it. In instances in which variation exists between the two documents, I note the discrepancies and compare and contrast each man's version of events.

³¹¹ Escandón, *Autos*, folio 322v5-11.

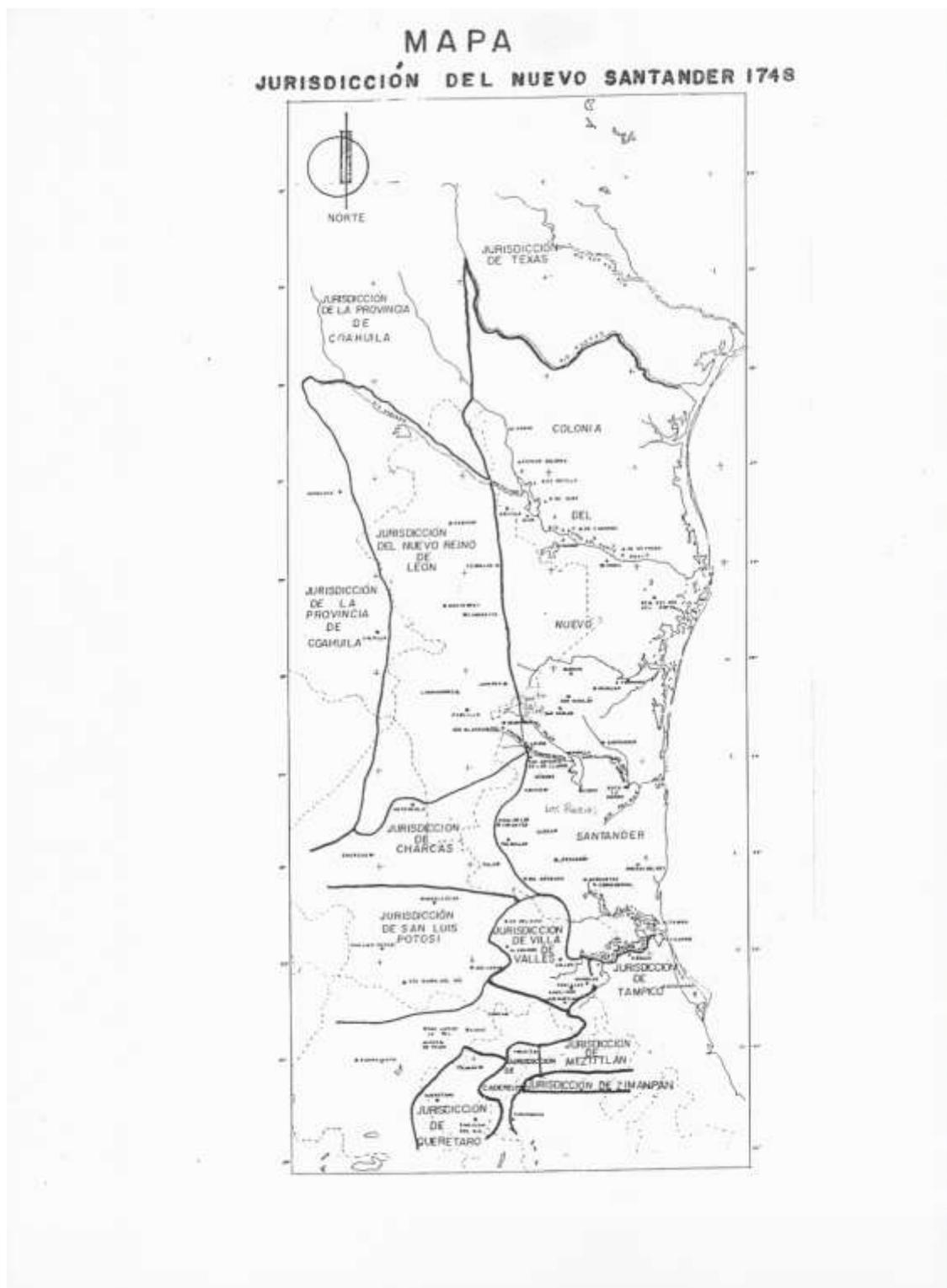


Figure 2: Map of Nuevo Santander (Osante, 1997)

An Account of the Preliminary Colonization of Nuevo Santander, 1748-49

On December 2, 1748, Colonel José de Escandón departed Querétaro accompanied by Captain José Díaz Maldonado, who was the captain of the San Pedro Toliman³¹² company, along with sixteen of the best soldiers from it, and twenty-five of his own servants. A lieutenant and thirteen soldiers from Europe that Escandón had arranged to accompany him were also added for “the burdens of the sea that could occur.”³¹³ Escandón reports having arranged everything that he considered necessary, the details and cost of which he would leave to the viceroy’s superior understanding, who he would inform of everything that was occurring during the preliminary colonization efforts.³¹⁴

Escandón reports receiving a letter from the Sergeant Major Antonio Ladrón de Guevara on December 1, in which Guevara advised him that the settlers and soldiers who are in the seven settlements along the mountain range of the New Kingdom of León are very content. Escandón asks God to grant him the wisdom that such important work will require.³¹⁵

Escandón laments that no religious from the Apostolic College of San Fernando had reached him, and notes how much they will be missed, as much for administration of settlers and soldiers, as for the gathering of the natives. He notes that he will take into consideration the fact that these religious have been unable to do more, as he has first-hand knowledge of the Reverend Father Commissary, the College Prelate, Friar José

³¹² Modern-day Tolimán in the Mexican State of Querétaro. Alberto Leduc, *Diccionario de Geografía, Historia y Biografía Mexicanas* (Mexico City: Imprenta C. Bouret, 1910), 997.

³¹³ Escandón, Autos, folio 304r13-14.

³¹⁴ Ibid, folios 304r16-304v1.

³¹⁵ Ibid, folio 304v2-6.

Ortes de Velasco's zeal. Escandón reports that the twelve fathers from the Apostolic College of Guadalupe de Zacatecas notified him that they planned to depart for the stopping places that he had designated for them on December 1.³¹⁶

On January 8, 1749, Escandón advises the viceroy that he had happily continued his journey since he had last written to the viceroy on December 1, and notes that although his party had experienced strong northern winds and snow flurries, the organization for transporting the supplies and families has been good. He notes that the majority of the people are suffering from the small pox epidemic, but that even with that burden, they continue traveling.³¹⁷

The two militia companies from Guadalcazar and the Valley of Maíz, along with the other pickets, accompanied Escandón as an escort for the beast of burden and the settlers to the Tula Mission. The Marques de Castillo de Aisa who had offered to join Escandón if he considered it necessary was waiting for Escandón there.³¹⁸ Escandón decided to reserve the Marques's generous offer until after the settlements had been founded, as it would be the opportune time to defeat the natives who rebelliously abused the benefits of the settlement and have fled.³¹⁹

Escandón reports that he founded the town Santa María de Llera on December 25 in a beautiful site about two leagues downstream from the Voca del Jaumave after having performed a complete exploration of the stopping place Las Ruzias. He notes that although the river is rapid, water for all kinds of planting can be removed from it.

³¹⁶ Ibid, folio 304v6-16.

³¹⁷ Ibid., folio 306r2-9

³¹⁸ Ibid., folio 306r10-16.

³¹⁹ Ibid., folio 306r16-20

Escandón placed Captain José de Escajadillo in charge of the town and placed forty-five families of settlers, eleven soldiers, and fifty-five families of friendly natives there. So that the natives would gather, Captain Escajadillo had them prepared in the nearby Santa Clara and Monte Alverne Sierras. Escandón provided clothing to the natives and their women, and gave oxen, plowshares, axes, and other hardware to them. He also gave the natives the necessary maize to sustain themselves until they would be able to harvest their crops.³²⁰

Captain Antonio de Oyarvide was already fifteen leagues to the southeast of Santa María de Llera with fifty families of settlers, sixty Olives and Huasteca natives (the majority of whom are good workers and soldiers), and his squad of eleven soldiers for the settlement of San Juan de Horcasitas. Captain Juan Francisco de Berberena, who was leading the convoy with his company from Villa de Valles, and who was exploring the area came and advised Escandón of this news. Escandón reports that Horcasitas should be founded five leagues from El Cojo Pass, and twelve leagues from the settlement of Altamira along the same route as the Metate Pass.³²¹

The Captain of Horcasitas, who is Juan Pérez, advised Escandón that he was also ready with his families of settlers, constructing dwellings and stockades for security from the natives. Escandón reports that Captain Pérez is assisted by the company of mulattoes from Tampico, the captain of which is Miguel de Castro Correa. According to Escandón, Captain Pérez has worked tirelessly at his own expense in everything that has occurred, as has Antonio Chirinos, who, with his company from Panuco, arrived at Llera

³²⁰ Ibid., folios 306r21-306v12.

³²¹ Ibid, folio 306v13-25.

and was working the land in order to clear paths and assure the safety of the new settlements.³²²

Escandón notes that the expressed settlements of Horcasitas and Llera, and also the one of the town of Santa Barbara that will be in Tanguanchin will be founded upon his return trip, due to having to continue his journey without delay along the mountain range in the frontier of the New Kingdom of León. Escandón determined that his presence was more necessary in the frontier due to none of the militia companies having yet entered the area. He felt that it was necessary to accompany and guard them, so that the apostates do not do any harm that will detract from the expedition. The corporal from Santa Barbara himself came to tell Escandón that he had prepared all of his settlers, and that he had thirty good families of barbarous natives gathered along with some Christian ones.³²³

On January 1, Escandón founded the town of San Francisco de Güemes on the bank of the Santa Engracia River, a little more than three leagues ahead of Mesas Prietas, and ten to twelve leagues in front of San Antonio de los Llanos in such a fertile inviting place, with so many comforts, that aside from the forty settlers, others appeared, and Escandón admitted them without any additional financial assistance. Philippe Telléz Girón remained there as captain with his squad of six soldiers.³²⁴

Escandón founded the town of San Antonio de Padilla on January 6 in a stopping place near where the Purification and the Santa Engracia Rivers join, at about two

³²² Ibid., folios 306v25-307r3.

³²³ Ibid., folio 307r3-16.

³²⁴ Ibid., folio 307r17-25.

leagues from them, and ten leagues to the west-southwest of the previous settlement of Güemes. San Antonio de Padilla has thirty families of settlers and eleven soldiers to which Escandón added four more, due to there being many natives nearby, with the condition that upon completing their duties in a year's time they would remain there as settlers, and only the original seven would remain under Captain Gregorio de la Paz's command.³²⁵

In Escandón's judgment, San Francisco de Güemes and San Antonio de Padilla would outgrow the other settlements in a very short time due to their fertile grounds, abundance of water for watering crops, fish, wood, pasturage, and good temperament. Escandón provided the settlers a map so that they would construct their homes in such a way so that the streets and plazas would be organized. Escandón determined that 2,000 square *varas* of land would be necessary for the dwellings and orchards for the towns, that there should be a large section of public land for large livestock, six *caballerías*³²⁶ of land for planting crops, and two places for smaller livestock for each of the settlers and soldiers. Escandón provided twelve *caballerías* and two better places for the captains, which is the least with which he was able to make them happy, and he noted that it would be necessary to give more to many who had large families in order to finance their settling there, as only this incentive brought them to the risk in which they were

³²⁵ Ibid., folio 307r26-35.

³²⁶ This is a measurement equivalent to sixty *fanegas* or 3863 *areas*. *Diccionario de la Lengua Española*. (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1970), 252.

involved among so many barbarous ones who required reduction or driving out by sword.³²⁷

Escandón reports that some of the settlers had asked him for some specific pieces of land to settle between the settlements, and that will be necessary to give it to some of them so that with the ranches and *haciendas* settled, the passages will be protected.

Escandón determined that these must be settled later.³²⁸

Escandón defers all decisions regarding the settlements to the viceroy, and urges him to recall information that Escandón had included in earlier reports, specifically number sixteen from his report from the sixth of August from 1744, in which Escandón had proposed giving six *caballerías* and two plots for large livestock to each settler, and that the viceroy had approved it. Escandón reports that he has decreased this amount to two sites for small livestock because the plots seemed too large to him, and due to the fact he has increased the size of the plots given to large families.³²⁹

Escandón laments that religious from the Apostolic College of San Fernando still have not arrived, for which reason the settlement that is being constructed remains in the disconsolation, which he leaves to the viceroy's consideration. He reports that the Reverend Father Friar Agustín de Jesús, a religious Carmelite, and administrator of the *haciendas* from his convent of San Luis Potosí served as his priest. Escandón reports that with an order from his province, Friar Agustín de Jesús has accompanied him with forty servants at his own expense in the same way he did in the previous campaign.

³²⁷ Escandón, Autos, folios 307r35-307r18.

³²⁸ Ibid., folio 307v19-23.

³²⁹ Ibid., folio 307v23-34.

Escandón notes that Friar Agustín de Jesús has acted as a religious and a soldier, because at the same time that he did not omit any diligence that could drive that which is spiritual, he also tended to his people in the toilsome burdens that are necessary night and day among the barbarous ones, in order to protect them from their own treason. According to Escandón, Friar Agustín de Jesús was to return home the following day, due to three religious from the Apostolic College of Zacatecas having reached Escandón's location, and Friar Agustín de Jesús has offered to leave twenty of his servants who are good soldiers in Santa María de Llera for four months at his own expense for its security while the settlers construct their homes and prepare the irrigation channels to harvest crops, which is a major factor in the permanence of the settlements.³³⁰

Friar Simón del Hierro was one of the three religious noted above who reached Escandón. Friar Hierro explains the reason for the delay in the religious reaching Escandón, noting that he and three other companions had lost their way. Hierro reports having left the College of Zacatecas *hacienda* and records passing through the following locations in his travels: the Cerro de Santiago, the Salinas del Espíritu Santo, the Cruces of El Jaumave, El Verado, Los Charcos, the Laguna Seca, the Arroyo Seco, Soledad, the Blanco River, San Antonio de los Llanos. Hierro finally arrived at the first settlement, San Fernando de Güemes sixteen leagues to the south where Escandón had founded it a few days earlier. Eight leagues ahead, in the settlement of San Antonio Padilla, Friar

³³⁰ Ibid., folio 308r1-25.

Hierro, along with the Fathers Villar, García, and José, caught up to Escandón on the very next day.³³¹

After Hierro's arrival, Escandón reports that one of the three religious priests who have just reached him will go as his priest, and that the Fathers Villar and Joaquín García will remain in San Antonio de Padilla due to not wanting to separate, charged with administering Güemes from it.³³² Friar Hierro adds that the fathers will remain in a small *jacal* near a small altar that was very quickly constructed. Hierro reports that his plan is to depart the following day to travel to the Cerrito del Aire, eight leagues from their current location.³³³ Escandón notes that he plans to head for Nuevo Santander where, according to reports, the Sergeant Major Antonio Ladrón de Guevara is already with the settlers and the squad that will compose his town.³³⁴

Escandón continues his report, adding that as soon as the exploration of the port was completed, he would advise the viceroy and would continue on to the rest of the settlements, where preparations are underway, even for the one on the Nueces River, which was the most difficult due to the distance, and given it has given Escandón the most to do, due to the lack of maize, of which he now had what was necessary, and the small pox epidemic. Escandón reports that the barbarous and apostate natives have remained with special care moving. He noticed that they will remain that way until all of these settlements have a good start, and of all the settlers and soldiers are settled there, and the thorough exploration of the land and its access points is complete. The natives

³³¹ Hierro, Diario, folios 209r10-209v10; The specific date is unknown, as neither man provided it in his respective Autos or Diary.

³³² Escandón, Autos, folio 308r26-29.

³³³ Hierro, Diario, folio 209v16-21.

³³⁴ Escandón, Autos, folios 308r30-308v1.

from the Salinas de la Barra advised Escandón that they were prepared to gather with their Captain Marcos de Villanueva, as were the other gentiles and some apostates who were traveling with settlers for that settlement.³³⁵

Escandón continues his journey, noting that he left the previous stopping place on January 9, crossing the river and directing the journey to the Cerrito del Aire, where he found the track of Sergeant Major Antonio Ladrón de Guevara who was with the settlers and soldiers destined for Nuevo Santander. Ladrón de Guevara had traveled along the river and the Cerro de Tamaulipa, the old one. Escandón had to double back and catch up to Ladrón de Guevara, which he achieved on the January 14, at approximately eight leagues from the sea.³³⁶

Friar Hierro provides additional detail in his diary regarding the dates of January 8-14. Hierro reports that he, along with the rest of the party, which was comprised of about 200 people with soldiers, muleteers, and others from the kingdom, accompanied the colonel's troops during this time. He reports that Escandón headed the group, and that they departed from the Cerrito del Aire and traveled to where the route used to be between south, north, and east in order to look for a stopping place that was supposed to be certain.³³⁷

Friar Hierro reports that the entire party continued travelling, and on January 11, they walked to the south in search of the Adjuntas River, where the settlement is located on the river. Hierro notes that this river is very voluminous, and that it is called Las

³³⁵ Ibid., folios 308v2-309r4.

³³⁶ Ibid., folio 311r1-11.

³³⁷ Hierro, Diario, folios 209v24-210r8.

Adjuntas because it carries water from San Antonio de los Llanos, the Purificación River, and the Santa Engracia River, all along the plains. There are some low hills, many swamps, and small pools of water. The grass is very tall, there are a few mountains, and these are not along the route, but rather, in the distance, in such a way that they are seen in almost all parts of the land. To the south, the Tamaulipa is visible, and on the other side to the north, the other Tamaulipa is visible, although this is more to the west toward the Kingdom of León, in such a way that the Kingdom of León is located to the west, east of the sea. The Port of Tampico is on the southern side, along the opposite route. Hierro reports that the party walked almost to the place where the Las Adjuntas River enters the sea, which is where the journey ended.³³⁸

On January 12, Friar Hierro, along with the others, crossed the Adjuntas River downstream, and the entire party travelled along the same southeasterly route along the river's course. On January 14, Hierro and his party approached the settlers, who were going to settle the port that was supposedly to be found in that location. Hierro report that these settlers, comprised of sixty families, thirty from Santander and thirty from the Cerrito del Aire, desired more to travel than to remain there alone in the said Cerrito, due to the fear that they had of the natives, who appeared to be many in many areas, although they were unable to communicate with them or speak to them due to the fear of seeing many people together. The natives that were seen from San Antonio de Padilla up to this point were at one time more than twenty in the Adjuntas Pass, and another ten or twelve were seen near the Cerrito del Aire. Hierro notes that the settlers never spoke to them,

³³⁸ Hierro, Diario, folios 210r10-210v6.

because as soon as the natives saw that the party was so large, they retreated without allowing the opportunity to speak to them. Three of the natives were those who had been with Captain Guevara, which gave Hierro and his party reason to follow the settlers' tracks for a day before catching up to them.³³⁹

Hierro continues his diary, noting that on January 14, at about two in the afternoon, when the party approached the two settlements of people, he saw that there were only a few women and men who were found to be very distressed and were crying without knowing what to do. The rest of the people were in search of the natives, who the night before had shot arrows and killed many beasts of burden and had taken many more. Hierro notes that his party's arrival was fortunate for the people of said settlement. Captain Guevara, along with the rest of those who went in search of said natives, arrived that night without being able to report more than having lost the trail of the natives in the mountains, due to being so densely populated with brush and having so many narrow paths that it caused his party to turn back.³⁴⁰

Escandón continues his report, after having arrived at the Cerrito del Aire. He reports that he did everything to explore the terrain, its comforts, the number of natives, and the mouth of the river at the sea, leaving two camps in that stopping place. He notes that this location is at the eastern point of said Tamaulipa to the north, and that the city of Horcasitas is to the south of another, about twenty-four leagues along a good road for this one and the rest of the settlements that will be founded.³⁴¹

³³⁹ Ibid., folios 210v6-211r3.

³⁴⁰ Hierro, Diario, folio 211r3-17.

³⁴¹ Escandón, Autos, folio 311r12-21.

According to Hierro, on January 15, it was arranged for a picket of soldiers of twenty-five men to depart with Captain Guevara to explore the land and to discover the road that they needed to take, due to no one knowing it, and they only discovered that said river formed a pool, which caused them to believe that said port for which they were searching, was nearby. Guevara's picket discovered that a mountain impeded the path, which caused the soldiers and settlers to make a breach through which the party could travel, which was performed the following three days. Hierro notes that the soldiers cleared a path with axes, forming a narrow path about eight leagues long in order to reach the sea. During these days, the company, which was travelling in two parties, arrived fourteen leagues closer in search of the path.³⁴²

Hierro notes that the Tamaulipa Sierra of Huasteca was nearby, where about 150 Gandules natives, who were well armed, fat, strong, and appeared to be twenty years of age and above, arrived.³⁴³ In his reports, Escandón adds that he knew these natives to be timid and confused, that their number was large, and that the land is so fertile that it typically produces maize, squash, yams, and beans, even when the natives plant very little of the first.³⁴⁴ Hierro reports that these natives came in peace loaded with squash, sweet potatoes, and beans, in such a way that they supplied all the companies of settlers and soldiers for some time.³⁴⁵ According to Escandón, they gave some of all of this to the Spaniards, and he gave them an abundance of clothing, tobacco, and small wares. Escandón gave canes to the captains and other things with which they seemed pleased,

³⁴² Hierro, *Diario*, folios 211r17-211v9.

³⁴³ *Ibid*, folios 211r17-211v5.

³⁴⁴ Escandón, *Autos*, folio 311r20-24.

³⁴⁵ Hierro, *Diario*, folio 211v9-15.

and, according to Escandón, it has been demonstrated by the fact that they have not made any movement of war.³⁴⁶

Hierro reports that these natives promised to come back after three days, and that they returned in the same manner, loaded in such a way that there were squash and beans to eat during the journey until heading north. Hierro notes that the respective clothing was given to these natives: hats, canes, and underwear to the captains, only blankets to some of the others, only underwear to the others, and trinkets, knives, daggers, scissors, and tobacco to the others, and because the Spaniards were unable to give equally to everyone, it was recognized that the majority of them became very displeased and began grumbling.³⁴⁷

Hierro provides additional information regarding these natives, noting, on the first occasion when these natives came, it was known that they were distrustful, and the Spaniards themselves were not without fear of them, because more than fifty of the natives, who remained behind did not arrive, acting as a rear guard, prepared to fight if necessary, but as they found that the Spaniards did not do them any harm, everyone, including the Spaniards and soldiers, became less fearful. The most important of these natives, who was their captain, asked for a small cup of water, and beginning with the colonel, he began washing the hands of all the captains and chiefs who were seated at the table, and next, gracefully removing the piece of cloth that covered his legs, he took it and began washing their hands as a symbol of peace, and he also washed and cleaned the top part of the father's head. It was very difficult and necessary not to laugh, but as the

³⁴⁶ Escandón, Autos, folios 311r24-311v3.

³⁴⁷ Hierro, Diario, folios 211v17-212r4.

native captain did this with such seriousness, the same was shown to him during the process, and later everyone was entertained by the funny story.³⁴⁸

Escandón continues his report documenting his departure from this site with the natives and reports travelling along a small continual mountain approximately eight leagues long. With a native guide and at the force of axes and machetes, the soldiers opened a path in order to penetrate the coast. On January 24, Escandón arrived with a picket of soldiers at the beach, where there are many *lagunas* nearby. He also reports that a great quantity of salt coagulates in one of the *lagunas* and that the natives had placed some of the salt in a pile.³⁴⁹

Escandón continues, noting that the first thing that he encountered was a shipwrecked sloop fourteen *varas* long, loaded with brazil wood, which said natives had set ablaze in order to remove the metal pieces. Captain Morales, who is from that *ranchería*, and who with some work understands the Castilian language, told Escandón that three months ago the sea tossed said sloop and eight Spaniards who were aboard it, and who were headed to Tampico, upon the beach during a storm. The natives were wearing the shirts and other clothing from those poor sailors who, according to what those who are from Tampico told Escandón, arrived barely alive to that Barra at the beginning of November, having miraculously escaped with their lives. With Captain Morales and his people well gifted, he turned six rifles, some strands of hemp that they had not burned, and a few nails over to Escandón.³⁵⁰

³⁴⁸ Hierro, Diario, folios 212r4-212v1.

³⁴⁹ Escandón, Autos, folio 311v4-10.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., folio 311v10-25

From the stopping place where said sloop was located, Escandón continued his journey north along a tongue of low sand dunes, which were 200 *varas* wide, seven leagues to the end of the one that enters a barra about 150 *varas* wide, and three *varas* deep, that forms in a spacious bay in which some sand banks are visible along that side, as well as the river's entrance to it along the western side. He reports that they were unable to travel along the coast, due to it joining the large salt *laguna* that the expressed tongue of sand dunes forms with the sea, and there being no fresh water in the stopping place, and due to there being a strong southeasterly wind that was uncomfortably blowing at that time. This forced Escandón to return to where he had left the camp with the intent of searching for the other river mouth or bay in the northern part. Escandón notes that more than fifteen leagues upstream, the ocean's tide rises where he saw many shad, sharks, tuna, and other large fish where it is deep, and in all these places, the water is salty as it is from the ocean.³⁵¹

Hierro's version of the incident in which the sloop was encountered varies from Escandón's. Hierro reports that he and his party were delayed for several days, and that other natives from the coast arrived, and that even though the Spaniards hardly understood the natives because they were *bozales*, the natives made the Spaniards understand that there was a small boat near the sea. Hierro reports that Escandón and his party headed in search of the port, and although everyone understood it to be a boat, it was not made clear that it was burned and destroyed. According to Hierro, Escandón's party was pressured by curiosity and the desire to find the port, and they headed toward

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*, folios 311v26-312r10.

the sea with a picket of fifty soldiers. They left camp the following day, and they arrived there finding a frigate or small boat cast upon the land, and it was burned. They were able to avail themselves of some iron bars and they also brought some rifles, small cruets, and other items that they recovered. However, they did not find the port for which they were searching, for which reason they returned very disheartened and even more so the colonel, who was unable to disguise his feelings. Hierro reports that for some days Escandón ate poorly and he even became ill. Hierro notes that this was “perhaps from sadness,” because he had promised with certainty that he would be able to find the port and they were awaiting the news in Mexico for hours that he had found it. Four days later the soldiers returned from the sea, which was located about twelve leagues distant from the camp.³⁵²

Escandón continues his report noting that during the twenty-one days that he had spent in the region, either due to the salt water or because the water that the camp was using was tainted with a black bitumen that is called *chapopote*,³⁵³ which is similar to tar, such an indisposition in the soldiers’ and settlers’ health and death in the livestock and horses occurred and due to this, it was necessary for him to march five leagues upstream along the riverbank. He had sent 125 pack mules with thirty soldiers so that they could bring supplies from the city of Horcasitas, which were lacking there, as was the case in the rest of the settlements on that side. Escandón reports that it was necessary to change the water supply in order to cure them from the illness.³⁵⁴

³⁵² Hierro, Diario, folios 212v12-213r4.

³⁵³ Also referred to as *betún de Judea*, this is a type of asphalt natives used. Francisco J. Santamaría, *Diccionario de Mejicanismos* 4th edition (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1983), 360.

³⁵⁴ Escandón, Autos, folio 312r11-23.

Hierro reports additional information regarding the illness and notes that the majority of the people, settlers and soldiers alike, began to become sick, and even the livestock, without knowing the cause, as that this had not occurred in any other part of the journey. The illness caused them to move the camp to the south in a stopping place that they named Hell, much in the way of a journey. There, the party miraculously escaped a fire which, casting destructive flames in the air, overtook them like an enemy, and on this occasion, they would have been better off it had been the other way around. As the result of much work, the small site where the people were located was left unburned, as its voracity extended for many leagues, leaving everything black and filled with smoke. Immediately thereafter, camp was moved to a place that they named Purgatory, where a mass of thanks was sung in rounds the following day, which was the day of San Ildefonso.³⁵⁵

Hierro continues his diary, noting that due to the lack of supplies among the settlers, a picket of thirty soldiers from this stopping place was dispatched to the city of Horcasitas to bring two lots of maize to aid this necessity. With respect to his location, the city of Horcasitas is to the south, and Altamira is closer to Tampico. Captain Berberena, who placed the families for Huasteca where they would be very near the settlers, founded these two settlements at the same time, and due to this, they remained very well supplied. Hierro surmises that there must be forty leagues between the settlements, and due to being in the middle of these, in a stopping place about fifteen leagues out, it was arranged for Captain Guevara, along with twelve soldiers and those

³⁵⁵ Hierro, Diario, folios 213r4-21.

who were traveling to Horcasitas, to explore the forty leagues in order to leave those who were going to settle the Port of Santander, which they did not find, there. Captain Guevara arrived at the stopping place, and seeing many natives nearby, he did not risk it, and he quickly returned, proclaiming that he was unable to proceed, and it is believed that this was due to fear.³⁵⁶

Up to this point, Hierro notes, that there must be about forty leagues that he and his party have travelled from the Cerrito del Aire, and these are all along the same route, except for those from the river's pass, which was crossed farther downstream. The other party travelled to the north on distant journeys to look for a better path. They came to a watering hole where they built a dwelling while they looked for a better place for the settlement.³⁵⁷

Hierro continues his diary, noting that on February 12, ten very friendly natives came to this stopping place offering peace, as they had left their arrows at some distance, and they came to visit some captains, and later they were given tobacco due to not having time to give them anything else, because night was approaching. They later returned shooting arrows and killing some livestock that they found, which was about twelve head, for which reason the following day they were attacked in their *ranchería* that was about a league away from the Cerrito del Aire. One native was killed and the others fled, leaving their dishes and horses that they have in the mountains there. The soldiers availed themselves of some leathers that were left behind.³⁵⁸

³⁵⁶ Ibid., 213r21-213v18.

³⁵⁷ Ibid., folios 213r18-214r2.

³⁵⁸ Ibid., folio 214r2-15.

Escandón resumes his report, noting that there are admirable stopping places to settle between the river and the Tamaulipa, keeping in mind that no stopping place equal this one of the Cerrito del Aire, due to its many good lands, pasturages, abundance of waters, ease of removing firewood, wood from the rivers, and its good temperament. The Cerrito del Aire is in the center of the natives and the precise crossing place to the inner settlements, and if it is able to be verified that the port is deep enough, with the river that dominates the land being nearby, it will be even more advantageous.

Escandón decided to place the settlement of the town of Nuevo Santander³⁵⁹ in that place in honor of Cinco Señores, leaving the Sergeant Major Antonio Ladrón de Guevara as captain, a lieutenant, a sergeant, and twelve soldiers with sixty families of settlers there, among whom there are many lucid people. Escandón determined that it was necessary for him to leave the referenced number of people there, because he notes that it would have been very difficult with the number being less for the families to remain there, nor were there families who wanted to remain in known risk.³⁶⁰

Hierro includes that the founding of Nuevo Santander occurred on February 16.³⁶¹ Escandón notes that the site is located half way between the referenced San Antonio de Padilla and the Salinas de la Barra, the distance between which will be settled with *haciendas*.³⁶² Friar Hierro adds that the town of Santander has a good watering hole that allows for easy removal of water, near the Cerrito, and with respect to the one to the north, the temperament appears good. He notes that what are bothersome

³⁵⁹ Modern-day Jimenez.

³⁶⁰ Escandón, Autos, folios 312r24-312v6.

³⁶¹ Hierro, Diario, folio 214v19-20.

³⁶² Escandón, folios 312r24-312v9.

are its furious north winds, perhaps due to being barren, and this is the case without exception in the rest of the settlements. In all of them they experienced the wind lasting twenty-four hours and in some of them it lasted almost forty. From here another picket of twenty-five soldiers was dispatched to the town of San Antonio de Padilla in order to bring some maize as supplies. These soldiers returned four days later and the Father Villar and Friar Joaquin García came with them because Father Saenz had arrived with his companion. They remained in the town of Padilla. The party that had gone to Horcasitas also arrived here having come from Purgatory, which caused some concern, because they took a while, and the need for supplies was growing in Santander, and it was decided to also send for supplies to Padilla. The time spent on this allowed the opportunity to also send for some supplies to the Kingdom of Leon, writing to Roque Barrera, who is the main supplier.³⁶³

According to Hierro, the founding of the town happened in the following way: with all the soldiers and settlers gathered together in the plaza, which is large and spacious as it is about 200 square *varas*, with their weapons, at the sounding of the drum, they brought the branches that was prepared to the captain of the town, and being at the door, the church or branch was blessed. The colonel gave his reasoning to the captain, having him swear to defend the city, encouraging and exciting the settlers, and he ended by saying that his administration entrusted that which is ecclesiastical to the fathers from

³⁶³ Hierro, Diario, folios 214r16-19.

the College of Zacatecas. The Fathers Villar and Garcia assisted in singing mass, and later everyone sang the Alabado.³⁶⁴

Colonel Escandón took the soldiers and settlers to his tent, having ordered them in close formation. He took out a long-necked bottle of a beverage made of water, sugar, and flavored brandy, which was shared among the captains and the most important native chiefs in small silver glasses. They toasted and gave thanks. Here the Father Simón reproached Escandón, saying that Escandón had lacked to do what was most important, which was to assign a place for a mission for the town, and that this was the reason for which Hierro had come, and this was what the Patent that Hierro brought with him ordered him to do, and that it did not mention founding towns, but rather missions, and that if the natives did not have a place to live and raise their crops, that this was sufficient reason for them not to gather, etc. The colonel showed some indifference hearing this proposal. He said that at this time there were no natives and that when there were, he would give them a place so that they would come to the town with the settlers, and that they would plant with them and that he would see to this on his return. Father Friar Simón pressed him on this, saying that he was not in agreement with his disposition nor his answer and that he had to designate a separate place for a mission and its people and lands so the natives could grow their goods and crops, and that the College had sent him on its behalf, to which Escandón responded that he would assign a place for a settlement, a place with the name of Nuestra Señora de la Consolación, and

³⁶⁴ Ibid., folios 214v24-215r13.

he left the rest of the lands for another time, saying that he did not have time and he needed to found the other settlements.³⁶⁵

Escandón resumes his report, noting that the transportation of settlers' equipment and supplies, due to the long distance, lack of financial assistant for the cost, and the increase in the price of seeds, caused him to appease the planters and even provide them some wheat and maize, and it was necessary for him to bring it from Huasteca and the Kingdom of León.

During the journey that brought Escandón along the coast, a native captain with seven companions from a *ranchería* of 100 families located to the north of said Cerrito del Aire came out to see him. He showed sign of friendship; Escandón provided him gifts, and he was supposed to return the following day with his people, but he behaved so poorly that upon leaving camp that same night, he killed seven of Escandón's horses, aside from those that he left injured, and he later took up arms with his people on the highest part of said mountain top, satisfied that it would be impossible for the Spaniards to penetrate it. Escandón sent thirty soldiers on foot with Captain Guevara to close off the exit routes with various pickets. The native captain decided to retreat, sending ones to tell the Spaniards that those who had done the damage were only young simple native boys, and they would not do it again. Escandón took eleven horses that the natives had in their *ranchería* and gave them to the friendly natives. Escandón considered that the natives had been sufficiently punished by this, and he later commanded the rest of the captains to agreed with said punishment, due to considering them ignorant, and having

³⁶⁵ Hierro, Diario, folios 215r14-215v21.

learned their lesson or Escandón could have had them all killed as traitors. Escandón notes that this is the only unpleasantness that there has been with natives up to this point, and with the settlements founded where he was placing them, it is necessary for all of the natives to be reduced.³⁶⁶

According to Escandón's report, the squads that he had dispatched to the city of Horcasitas returned after ten days with 220 *fanegas*³⁶⁷ of maize and other supplies for the settlers, soldiers, and natives who had gathered. Captain Josph Antonio de Oyarvide advised Escandón that his people are very content, are constructing dwellings, opening lands and irrigation channels, and that Captain Juan Francisco de Berberena had gone to the town of Altamira with his settlers. According to Escandón, Captain Berberena should have been there on the 25th of the past month and he had not advised Escandón of the reason for which they had returned to Tampico. The settlers say the apostates in that area have not let themselves be seen, but that they have not done any harm.³⁶⁸

Escandón also dispatched a squad along the mountain range to the north of said Tamaulipa to bring supplies from the town of San Antonio de Padilla, whose captain advised Escandón that he, his people, and its pack train drivers are content, and that they have been constructing dwellings, opening lands and irrigation channels, and that they tell him the same about San Francisco de Güemes. The settlement of Padilla is between the two Tamaulipas. The natives from both have gathered in peace with great hope for

³⁶⁶ Escandón, Autos, folios 312v10-313r10.

³⁶⁷ This is a medieval Spanish unit of measurement equivalent to 64,596 *áreas*, which is 100 square meters. *Diccionario de la Lengua Española*, 773.

³⁶⁸ Escandón, Autos, folio 313r11-22.

their settlement, and the captain from the town of Llera also informed Escandón that he continues without anything new to report, which Escandón believed was conducive to its settlement.³⁶⁹

Escandón notes that the Sierra of Tamaulipa, which is in the middle of these settlements and the kingdom of León, has been the surest refuge of all its apostates. The principal captains of these natives, with the end of achieving commutation for their atrocious former crimes, came to Escandón through Captain Guevara. Some of this native captain's people had accompanied Escandón for more than a month, and agreeing among themselves, they asked him for a settlement in a good stopping place named Cienegas de Caballero, which is at the foot of said Tamaulipa at the northern part. It has plentiful water, fish, pasturage, wood, and good valleys. These natives offered not only to gather all their people in that place, but also said that they would remain under the control of the colonists who wanted to stay there. Escandón notes that if they are able to fulfill this it would be an unthinkable benefit.

Escandón clothed them and gave gifts to these natives. He gave the title of captain to the one they themselves chose, and he sent them to gather their natives in four days. He reports that in the meantime, Captain José Leal will arrive with the settlers destined for the Mesa de las Caldas, which is located in this place, and it seemed more convenient to Escandón to place the expressed natives in said Cienegas de Caballero, which are about twenty-five leagues closer to Linares on the direct road to said New

³⁶⁹ Ibid., folio 313r23-32.

Kingdom of León, as it is the key to the expressed sierra along the side of San Antonio de los Llanos.

Escandón continues his report noting that two *rancherías* of apostates have done some harm, but as these have not behaved as the great majority of them, and he believed that they will easily come around due to the great fear they have conceived. Two other captains of apostates who appeared also accompanied Escandón during this time. They asked for a gathering place in the stopping place Tapeastle, eight leagues to the east of the town of Cadereyta in the kingdom of León. Escandón planned to send the Governor of the Kingdom of León a special request and order so that once this settlement takes place, the governor would give these natives some oxen and plow shares so they are able to raise crops.³⁷⁰

Escandón writes that within four days, he will depart for the Salinas de la Barra, where Captain Nicolas Merino advises him that he is already with all his people founding their settlement, and he also tells him captain Carlos Cantú left on the 15th of the past month with his settlers from the banks of the Río del Norte, farther downstream than the Valley de las Flores, and that Captain Pedro Gonzales would do the same, for which reason they already have all the money that corresponds to them.

Juan Miguel Cano, a resident of said New Kingdom of Leon offered to go settle a stopping place that is found on the road from the Salinas de la Barra to the Río del Norte with twenty-five families, to which Escandón happily agreed, due to being without cost

³⁷⁰ Ibid., folios 313r33-314r2.

to the royal *hacienda* and strengthening the security of the road, which had never been tread upon by Spaniards until his first entry in that desert.

In a letter, José de Toca Herrera, a resident from that city, notified Escandón that the viceroy had promised to send him 15,000 pesos in addition to the 65,000 that he had already received for the expenses of the expedition, which Escandón paid him. In another letter from the Lieutenant Colonel Bernardo de Pereda Torres, a resident from Querétaro, Escandón received the testimony of what the viceroy had decided in his order to the picket from the Presidio of the Bahía del Espíritu Santo destined for the new missions of San Francisco Javier. Escandón does not explicitly state what the viceroy's intentions are, but he notes that he understood the viceroy's orders.

Escandón continues his report, noting that he will take great care to advise the viceroy of everything else that is occurring, and concludes that up to this point, everything is going well although there have been reasons for exercising patience with the expense of the supplies, rigid temperature, death to the livestock, and indispensable contemplation by so many settlers and natives, and that he trusts in divine majesty that everything will end in his greatest honor and glory.

Writing in reference to the settlement of Santander, Escandón notes that with this settlement rooted and its natives dominated, the colonists will be able to safely construct a boat, for which reasons he left everything necessary there, so that they can navigate the river downstream. Escandón concludes that with this they will surely find and explore

up to the sea, and that he will see how much can be advanced; in the meantime Escandón would remain in the Villa of Santander.³⁷¹

Escandón's resumes his reports on February 23, however Friar Simón del Hierro provides additional information regarding the events that the colonization party experienced from February 17-23. Hierro writes that on February 19, the religious said mass to celebrate the happiness of San José. They said mass as they had the entire month of January, and it was in this way, with some branches that were erected on the 19th in a stopping place where a large cross was erected, and the soldiers placed Father Simón's cross there. The next day, the party's travels caught them up with the families from the settlements farther ahead. The chimeras and stories were so many among the women, because they were all from different places, and some of the jokes and stories began to become reasons for disagreement among the soldiers and settlers, in such a way that it was difficult for Father Friar Simón to not lose his patience, because they wasted time in devising stories, and he desperately wanted to continue traveling in order to have some relief from the arguing. During this time Ash Wednesday, which was the 19th, occurred, and in order to celebrate it, the religious blessed the nearest palm that they could find. This was such a strong palm that it burned the foreheads of everyone, it left them all marked with the holy cross, and although this was by chance, everyone was persuaded that it was intentional, and it was most observable in the women who were the cause of all the stories. Forty-five families of settlers remained in the town of Santander without the twelve soldiers, and another fifteen families with the captain who was for the

³⁷¹ Escandón, Autos, folios 314r3-314v10.

Cerrito del Aire. It was arranged for them to go to the town of Linares so that there they would be closer to the settlement that was going to be formed in the town of Burgos, the Cienegas de Caballero, near Tamaulipa in the kingdom, due to there being a lack of supplies during this time, and with this, the number of those who would eat would be reduced, removing these fifteen families.³⁷²

On the 21st, Hierro and his party continued marching, and even though the colonel wanted one of the fathers to remain in the settlement where Father Zabala had yet to arrive, no minister remained because there was no religious ornament, and because the Fathers Villar and Garcia were anxious to head to the Barra de las Salinas. This day Hierro and his party traveled at least ten leagues up to Las Cocheras, where there are some small inlets that run for a great distance and they finally join together in the Conchas River, where they arrived on the 21st, having travelled twelve leagues. Although the settlers were waiting one league ahead, where they already had many *jacales* formed, Hierro and his party did not arrive at this settlement until the following day, because they did not know the location of the designated place. They crossed the river the next day after mass, which was Sunday, with Captain Marcos, who is a reasonable native, and who has some Pinto natives gathered, along with some settlers. Hierro reports that they arrived with all these natives at the settlement at the Barra de las Salinas about eleven in the morning, because the party left late. They built a dwelling in said settlement one day, and because Captain Merino, who is the main captain, was out in the Kingdom with the end of directing families and supplies, he left founding the

³⁷² Hierro, Diario, folios 215v21-216v8.

settlement for the return trip that has to be completed along this route, and the trip was arranged for the 25th. The Fathers Villar and Garcia remained at the Salinas in order to found their living quarters. There is a great need for maize and they hope Captain Merino returns soon.³⁷³

Escandón resumes his report to the viceroy in late February and notes that he and the colonists arrived in two separate groups at the Salinas de la Barra on February 23. Escandón found that the squad of soldiers and more than thirty families of its settlers, who, having chosen a stopping place, were constructing their homes and everything else relating to its establishment. Its captain, Nicolas Merino, was not there due to having returned to the frontiers of the Kingdom of León in order to direct families and equipment he was lacking and supplies that are scarce, primarily caused by the poorness of the mules for their transport.

Escandón reports that he also found the native captain Marcos de Villanueva who was there waiting for him along with 106 families totaling 323 people. They were waiting for him along with the Spaniards, and with such demonstrations of affection, that Escandón felt there was a great probability they would remain there permanently. Escandón notes that the Comecrudo *ranchería*, which is found on the eastern part between the *lagunas*, advised him that they were unable to gather due to all its natives being very sick with small pox, but that as soon as they had recuperated, those who were still alive would gather. With everything that seemed necessary in the settlement,

³⁷³ Ibid., folios 215v21-217r15.

Escandón decided to set out for the Río del Norte, three days later, after he provided the natives with some supplies, some tobacco, and other things.

Escandón continues his report, noting that on the 25th of February, he marched to the Río del Norte where the San Juan River, which number 92 of his report from October 27, 1747 contains, joins it. Although it is only twenty-five leagues to the north, a little to the northeast, he did not arrive at said stopping place until March 3, due to having been occupied with deviations on the road in an attempt to explore another stopping place that could be settled, and with asking some natives that lived in those stopping places if they wanted to gather there, which resulted in a positive outcome.³⁷⁴

Friar Hierro adds additional information regarding these dates in his diary. He reports that he and his party continued travelling toward Las Flores, which is the settlement on the San Juan River. He writes that no one knew the route, but that a citizen from the kingdom who somewhat knew the area assured them that it was a short distance away, and that they could make it there in three days. This man served as a guide, and from the first day he began to wander aimlessly. The entire party left in search of the Conchas River up ahead, along the same road that heads to Linares from the Barra to the same bank, and they found a dwelling. The river is so deep in its body that it allows for crossing in few places. Here, Hierro reports that he encountered some Pintos natives, and that these provided some insight in order to find a direct route, because the citizen from the kingdom was roaming around.

³⁷⁴ Escandón, Autos, folios 321r1-321v14.

Hierro continues, noting that on the 26th, he and his party traveled up to the Sierra de los Pamoranos, which is also located on the bank of the Conchas River farther ahead, and that these natives were even better guides. On the 27th, they traveled up to some lakes, and due to not having a name, they named them San Marciano. From here a native from the Bocas Prietas nation guided the party. He was somewhat of a ladino, and was a captain to whom they had previously given a cane and underwear. This day, which was the 28th, Hierro reports that he and his party arrived at the bank of the San Lorenzo arroyo, which is very deep and its waters are very salty. It runs toward the Conchas River. They did not cross it; they arrived at the Ramires Charco farther ahead, where they slept. The Bocas Prietas native said that he did not know the way from here because these were other *ranchería*'s lands, and either they did not want to continue on out of fear, or they mutually respect the limits of each other's land. Almost exactly the same thing happened with the Pintos and Pamoranos who served as guides on earlier days. This night, two of the six soldiers who were coming on a different route arrived at Hierro's camp, and they advised that Father Marques, who accompanied Hierro, was at the San Marciano Charcos, and they would have followed his tracks if they had not recognized Hierro and his party's faces in this stopping place, and to verify this, the soldiers arrived. These men returned with certain news of Hierro's party's location.

Hierro continues his diary, noting that he and his party continued the first day of March through some very dense woods and very bad narrow paths in a straight path made by the natives, and that all of this was on a very cloudy day, which made it difficult to really know the path, for which reason the camp was moved to some pools of

water from where a picket of soldiers left to look for the trail. These soldiers came upon a sheppard of some sheep from Cerralvo. The soldiers brought him to the camp, and the following days he guided the party through some brush and some very narrow paths until he took them out of the Llano de las Flores, and they were safe.

On March 1st, Father Marques reached Hierro's location at a lake where they were lost because he had been following Hierro's party's tracks. The party went to the south where they spent the night. The next day, which was March 3rd, they arrived at the Azucar Pass where they ate and where they were taking a siesta, and as the afternoon was falling, they continued two leagues and they arrived at Camargo.³⁷⁵

In his report, Escandón adds that Captain Blas María de la Garza was already waiting for Escandón with his squad and the forty families of soldiers in a large valley that is formed between the named little Pamoranos mountain top and the Río del Norte, and extends to the east of the San Juan River, eight leagues from west to east and two leagues north to south. Escandón notes that it has good lands for all types of livestock, plenty of wood, firewood, fish, some pearls, and good temperament, and from what can be gathered, it will be easy to remove as much water as is necessary from the San Juan River. The settlers already have their dwellings constructed and in the meantime have placed the settlement on the eastern bank of the San Juan River due to the ease of removing water. After the irrigation channels are dug, the settlement will be placed in a more suitable spot about a league to the east. Escandón founded the town of the Valley of Camargo in this place. According to Escandón, it seems it will be a large place in a

³⁷⁵ Hierro, Diario, folios 217r15-218v4.

very short time, as much for the commodities its terrain offers, as for the good quality of the settlers and the enticing nature of the place, which is demonstrated by various other subjects having come to him to settle at their own expense, which he permitted, and a few of them remained there with their families. Escandón notes that the livestock these settlers brought with them are of the smaller variety, and that there are more than 13,000 head.³⁷⁶

Hierro provides additional information regarding the founding of Camargo in his diary. He notes that this settlement is on the same bank of the San Juan River, two leagues from Azucar Pass. Nearby there is a small hill with evergreen oak trees. He notes that this river is good in the part north of the settlement. It has deep pools of water. Water does not run through them, but rather, it pools up. There is a canoe to cross to the other side where there are many palm trees that serve to cover the dwellings.³⁷⁷ Escandón adds that they had only finished one canoe and they were building two more so that once they crossed the Río del Norte, the settlers would be able to transport salt from the large *salinas* that were on the other side, and at the same time provide a better passage to the Río de las Nueces and Santa Dorotea for which end Escandón gave them all the supplies that seemed necessary to him.³⁷⁸

Hierro continues his diary, noting that the settlers in this settlement already have all the dwellings constructed. Apart from the soldiers, there are thirty families and many settlers who have voluntarily gathered there. There were no churches, however. The

³⁷⁶ Escandón, Autos, folios 321v15-322r8.

³⁷⁷ Hierro, Diario, folio 218v4-11.

³⁷⁸ Escandón, Autos, folio 322r8-15.

fathers were living alone in some small shacks outside the town at about two arcabuzes' shots to the north, near the river, and they had a makeshift branchage formation to say mass. Here, Father Friar Agustin received Hierro and his party dressed in his cloak, and after being there a while, they party went to Captain Blas María's house, which is very good, though it is a *jacal*. It is tall and decent with respect to the other settlers.'

The soldiers made camp with their tents in the plaza, and it was arranged for the party to make a makeshift altar to celebrate the settlements, and the fathers also built a dwelling there, as there are plenty of branches in the nearby river, and on the banks of the Río Grande, which is not very far away, there are many long salt cedar branches that serve as strips of wood for the *jacales*.³⁷⁹

Escandón adds that Captain Garza advised him that four captains from the nearby *ranchería* of natives, were awaiting his arrival, and that a large portion of this *ranchería* came to see him. After Escandón gifted and clothed them, they offered to gather for which reason they began to transfer their families, who, according to what Captain Garza tells Escandón, are over 100 families and who have their living quarters at about 500 *varas* distance from the town. Escandón states that he designated a site and land so that they place a mission named San Agustín de Laredo there. Two religious from the Apostolic College of Guadalupe remain there for the spiritual administration of the natives and Spaniards, and so in the meantime they plant and harvest crops, and so said

³⁷⁹ Hierro, Diario, folios 218v12-219r6.

natives are able to sustain themselves, Escandón left as much maize as the overall lack in the frontier allowed him to leave them.³⁸⁰

In his diary, Hierro adds information documenting the founding of this town, noting that the settlement was arranged with Friar Simón and Father Marques and Friar Agustin saying mass, and everything else was performed in the same manner as in Santander. Saint Agustin was named as patron saint of the town, although a designated place was not determined. The settlement was planned to be on the bank of the river downstream and near the Río Grande, which is about a league south of the settlement. The land is loose, barren, and completely flat. There are no watering holes nearby, but a few pools are left when the river overflows.³⁸¹

Escandón continues his report, noting that he founded the town of Reynosa in honor of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe on good land with plentiful wood, firewood, and lands appropriate for raising crops and pasturage and the likelihood of removing water for irrigation from the same Río del Norte through a tributary that is formed in a high part, and it is suitable to that end. It is twelve leagues to the east on the same bank of said Río del Norte along the southern part. Escandón decided to place this settlement in said stopping place, which is 25 leagues of open, flat land away, due to the many natives that there are from there up to the sea, as they said that this was the only place where they would gather. Escandón named Carlos Cantú, who is a good soldier and who understands their language, as their captain. Cantú accompanied Escandón during his first expedition, and seemed suitable to Escandón. Escandón left Cantú in charge as

³⁸⁰ Escandón, Autos, folios 322r16-322v2.

³⁸¹ Hierro, Diario, folio 219r6-18.

captain of that settlement with forty families of settlers and eleven soldiers with such success that within a few days, more than 100 families of natives had gathered there, to whom Escandón distributed tobacco, small wares, some clothing, maize, beams, tools, and oxen, so they could begin to plant.³⁸²

Hierro adds that Cantú's project and plan failed, because with his people gathered to settle near the *laguna*, they found it to be completely dry, for which reason they found it necessary to found the settlement on the same side of the Río Grande. Hierro notes that he was unaware of the state of this settlement because hardly a goat ranch could be placed there, and they would likely die due to the land being so loose, and even more so due to the general overuse of water. Any settlement will require much work, and unless it is directly upon the riverbank, it is unable to be very near the river.³⁸³

Escandón continues his report noting that he left the spiritual administration of Reynosa in the care of the two religious from Camargo because it was in the center of the one where they are assigned, in the meantime until the viceroy is able to inform the Apostolic College of Guadalupe de Zacatecas. These two religious said they would do it, however they did not have an order from their prelate, due to this settlement not being included in the first proposal. A short distance away, a place was designated with the name San Joaquín del Monte for the native mission and settlement.³⁸⁴

In his diary, Hierro explains his point of view on the assignment of religious for Reynosa. He notes that the colonel proposed to Friar Simón that he should help them

³⁸² Escandón, Autos, folio 322v3-26.

³⁸³ Hierro, Diario, folios 219r24-219v10.

³⁸⁴ Escandón, Autos, folios 322v26-323v7.

administer this settlement because it should also be under the College of Zacatecas, to which Hierro responded that he did not have an order from his college to receive more than six, and as this one was not one of the six that were assigned to him, this should be at the College of Zacatecas's discretion. Father Marques wrote a requirement asking the religious to attend to it while the college was informed, and said father took charge of administering it.³⁸⁵

Escandón continues his report, noting that as he departed from Camargo, crossing the Río del Norte, it was his intention to march toward the Nueces River and Santa Dorotea, but that he was unable to do so, as much for the impossibility of supplying himself the necessary supplies that are unable to be found in that distant frontier at any cost, as for the herd of livestock being very tired due to such continual long marches, and due to some that they brought him from the Kingdom of León being so skinny due to the rigors of having little water, that they were unable to be used as a pack train animals. News reached Escandón that Captain Pedro González de Paredes, who was destined for the Nueces River with his fifty families of settlers, squad of soldiers, and two religious from the named Apostolic College had also been unable to leave Boca de Leones for the same reason. This added to Escandón's delay, and considering this to be too much and all that remained for him to do in these settlements, he decide to commission Captain Joaquin de Orobio Basterra with the necessary instruction so that as soon as his people arrive, said Pedro Gonzalez would go to said Nueces River, which is less than twenty-five leagues from Santa Dorotea, where he

³⁸⁵ Hierro, Diario, folio 219v10-20.

should already be with his presidio founded in the stopping place that was discovered on his first expedition, or in a better one to the north, if he finds it.

Escandón founded the town of Vedoya in honor of Nuestra Señora de Cobadona and a native mission in honor of Nuestra Señora del Soto, and notes that once the settlers and soldiers settle there, they will advise him. Escandón left the commission to the named Captain Blas María de la Garza so that as soon as he received news that said Pedro González had left the Boca de Leones, he dispatch him with a picket of six soldiers and four gentile natives who said they knew with certainty the part in which there was fresh water, and they happily offered themselves for the trip, leaving their families there. With the road explored by said picket, it will be easy to later clear it and prepare it for general travel, which is not as easy to do now, due to the growing party that is incapable of doubling back on occasions that require it.³⁸⁶

In his description of these days' occurrences, Hierro adds that the soldiers said that the water was close, but he believed there must be more than seventy leagues from Camargo to the Nueces, and it is possible that there may not be sufficient watering holes. Hierro reports that what happens as one travels down near the coast, is that you only find *lagunas* or small pools of water, and due to being salty, even the beasts of burden do not want to drink it, and due to this, one is unable to travel directly from the Conchas River to the Río Grande, and Hierro was convinced the same thing probably occurs from here to the Nueces.

³⁸⁶ Escandón, Autos, folios 323r8-323v19.

On the 10th of March in the afternoon, at the sounding of the drums, all the settlers and soldiers gathered with the captain and the secretary and the colonel's scribe. They made a catalogue of the soldiers and settlers' names, and one by one they asked each one what he had in terms of weapons, horses, and goods, all of which was noted, and Colonel Escandón delivered a very long speech, promising them nobility, many lands that they would divide, many privileges, and that they would become rich, and that there would be much commerce when they caught plenty of fish and gathered the plentiful salt and when they raised plenty of maize, wheat, etc. They were consoled with this and Escandón moved many grief-stricken ones, and he said goodbye to them in order to depart the following day, and he repeated this in all of the settlements.³⁸⁷

Escandón continues documenting the preliminary colonization of Nuevo Santander, noting that he still had no news if the referenced Captain José de Orobio Basterra is in Santa Dorotea, but that he did not doubt in the slightest that the Bahía del Espíritu Santo Presidio and Mission will already be found in that stopping place, and that once the Nueces River settlement is established, according to how much the fertile lands of this coast are desired, he understands that all of that land will be settled very soon.

On March 11, after having supplied what was necessary for said settlements, Escandón marched to the south in an effort to discover the stopping place Las Laxas Pass on the Conchas River, where Juan Miguel Cano, a *castizo* and resident from the Kingdom of Leon, had asked him for a license to settle there with another twenty-five families that he said he had gathered without cost. Escandón found this to be very

³⁸⁷ Hierro, Diario, folios 220r3-220v2.

convenient, due to being located twelve leagues to the west of the Salinas de la Barra settlement along the road that one must take to travel to Linares, which is twenty-five leagues along said route, and about six to the north of the one that will be founded in the Cienegas de Caballero, and Escandón gave it the name Maliaño, with the same lands and qualities as in the rest of the settlements. Cano had previously asked for land closer to the coast, but understanding the security that is needed along the roads and in order to dominate the rugged ground in which the natives hide themselves when they desert, Escandón gave it to him in this settlement, where he was content, and he left to transport families and goods. Escandón named him as corporal, and notes that its religious administration will be entrusted to the religious who are at Cienegas de Caballero, due to its proximity.³⁸⁸ Hierro adds that the fathers Marques and Fragoso accompanied the colonel up to Maliaño with Captain Blas María and some soldiers and citizens.³⁸⁹

Escandón continues his report, noting that on March 16, he arrived at the stopping place of the settlement of the Salinas de la Barra, where its Captain, Nicolas Merino was already with the families, goods, maize, and other supplies that he was lacking that they had sent from the kingdom of León.³⁹⁰ Hierro adds that until Captain Merino arrived with the supplies at the Salinas de la Barra, they did not find a single tortilla or any other thing among the settlers, and according to what the settlers said, they had not eaten in almost two days. Father Villar was very ill with fever; he later began improving. Father Friar Felipe Zavala was found in this settlement because he had the

³⁸⁸ Escandón, Autos, folios 323v20-324r24.

³⁸⁹ Hierro, Diario, folio 220v5-6.

³⁹⁰ Escandón, Autos, folio 324r24-29.

chance to come with Captain Merino from Linares, where he had left his sick companion Father Susarreguí. Everyone was saved by the biscuits and meat that Friar Hierro and his party had with them while they waited for the provisions from the kingdom of León.³⁹¹

Escandón notes that he founded the town of San Fernando in honor of Señor San José with forty families of settlers, eleven soldiers, and its captain Nicolas Merino. It is located in the northern part of the Conchas River, which is the one that enters the expressed Salinas de la Barra, and about a distance of seven leagues to the west of these, in a large plain that is about a half a league long and a half wide, and with removal of water from said river for its irrigation, chosen by the same settlers.³⁹² Hierro adds that the settlement was performed in the same manner as the others, by singing mass, led by all four fathers Simón, Zavala, García, and Villar, and it was determined that this site would be the one designated for the mission Nuestra Señora del Rosario.³⁹³

In general, Escandón adds, that all of this land is of high hills, in which they are able to plant very little, but they are very appealing, due to its good temperament, lands for seasonal planting, wood, firewood, salt, fish, and especially pasturage for raising all kinds of livestock. Aside from the named forty families, another thirty have appeared, asking to be added to the settlement without any additional assistance of cost, eleven of which are already staying there. Escandón believed that this settlement will continue to grow in population, as much due to the brief time the site has been there, as for other

³⁹¹ Hierro, Diario, folio 220v12-23.

³⁹² Escandón, Autos, folios 324r30-324v10.

³⁹³ Hierro, Diario, folios 220v23-221r4.

settlers taking advantage of the benefits that are offered along the bank of the Chorrea Arroyo, three leagues to the east at the southern part of said river, where there is good irrigation and good lands for seasonal planting. At the request of the natives themselves and the two religious destined for the administration, Escandón founded the Mission Cabezón de Sal in this place in honor of Nuestra Señora del Rosario, for which reason they were very happy.³⁹⁴

Hierro adds that Father Garcia had been with the Pintos natives and had seen a small watering hole with fresh water in the Arroyo de las Chorreras in the same place where the Pinto's *ranchería* is located, he told the colonel that he had to place the settlement for his people there, because the water in Las Chorreras is somewhat salty, and even more so because the people were disgusted saying that they were far from the settlement, because it was about three leagues distance. The natives made their petition and the colonel said that he would go look at the stopping place and that later he would make a decision. There was no time to do this in the days that Escandón was there until the day when he continued his journey, and leaving the party and veering off the path somewhat, he and the fathers went to see the area and stopping place, and he ordered them to place the dwellings and town church or mission for the Pintos there. The return trip was made two long journeys from the Barra to Santander, because it was at twenty-two leagues distance.³⁹⁵

In documenting this, Escandón notes that he added six families of settlers and three soldiers from those of San Fernando de Güemes in order to improve its security, at

³⁹⁴ Escandón, Autos, folios 324v10-325r2.

³⁹⁵ Hierro, Diario, folio221r4-24.

their request. Escandón clothed them and gave the settlers beans and tools so that they immediately begin to plant once the houses and the chapel they are building are complete. He also gave maize to the religious so they may sustain themselves while they harvest their crops. Escandón clothed and provided weapons to said Captain Marcos de Villanueva. Escandón notes that this action, along with his good behavior, has earned Captain Marcos much respect among all the barbarous natives who recognize him as their captain, and Escandón believed it will greatly contribute to the general gathering that is being undertaken.

On the 24th, Escandón marched toward Nuevo Santander, whose settlers were for the most part very happy as much for having discovered the great fertility of the land and easy removal of water for its irrigation as for having found the natives in its surroundings generally peaceful. The natives, who are many, promise that they will gather, especially those who live in the nearby Mesas de las Caldas with their Captain Santiago. Escandón clothed them and distributed tobacco and small wares to them in order to start the founding of the gathering place at a distance of 600 *varas* from the town. Escandón continues his report, noting that he designated a place for the Mission and town with the name Soto la Marina in honor of Nuestra Señora de Consolación with competent lands and waters, of which there are in abundance in this place, leaving the necessary maize there for its first year.³⁹⁶

Hierro adds that Captain Santiago is so spirited that on the first expedition that the colonel made, having even more soldiers than on this one, he displayed a very poor

³⁹⁶ Escandón, Autos, folios 325r2-325v3.

disposition and through another ladino native, Santiago asked Escandón for what reason he should give them his land, and advised Escandón that he was also a captain. On this entry, Captain Santiago was calmer because the Spaniards clothed him in an overcoat and underwear, and they gave him a cane and they gave clothing and trinkets to some of his people. As they were travelling to the Barra, and later when they were on their return trip in Santander, it came to pass that Hierro and his party spent two days with some native men and women with their children, to whom the soldiers gave some maize and some goat meat. Hierro advises that there is some hope for these natives, although they are very bozales. Some of them speak and understand Castilian poorly. During this time some of the natives who were in their *ranchería* when they attacked the Spaniards in the Cerrito del Aire arrived.

Hierro notes that there was nothing else noteworthy to report except that Father Zavala came into the colonel's company on the 25th. In the settlement of Santander, the party was delayed for a few days, during which time letters were sent to far away places. The soldiers wrote to Monterrey to the governor because there were some complaints from the providers who said the lack of maize that there was in the entire kingdom prevented them from sending it, and these settlers complained for the providers to send it. Letters were also sent to Mexico City, and the letters were sent from settlement to settlement to Jaumave through las Ruzias, and along this same route they saw the letters come to Mexico City through Querétaro, el Jaumave, and they entered through Las Ruzias.

Captain Santiago, of whom it was said above that he has his lands and *rancherías* in the Palmitos, was in the settlement for two days. He himself said there were some *salinas* with salt there, and he went with another native to show the Spaniards. A picket of twenty-five soldiers went with the captain to explore them. The *salinas* are very abundant. They are located twelve leagues away, and on the occasions when the soldiers went there, they brought a lot of good salt back, and on the third day they came loaded, and on this occasion many soldiers and settlers who had a great need for this salt were supplied. There are some other *salinas* near the Barra, which are the old ones from which the citizens from the Kingdom of León supplied themselves, but although they went from la Barra to look for them, they were unable to bring anything back, and they said there was very little salt there. Perhaps this was due to it having rained during that time. Some years ago, at these *salinas*, some thirty soldiers from the kingdom of León were killed one night, and they are still remembered.³⁹⁷

Regarding these *salinas*, Escandón reports that he and his party found salt coagulating in them in such abundance that he judged them to be the best along the entire coast, and later the settlers and soldiers came to remove all that could be removed. With this news, others are already coming to the frontier to buy it, and taking what they need with them, it will give a start to commerce, which is the substance of the provinces.

Escandón left Captain Antonio Ladrón de Guevara in charge with special care, so that in the meantime he could go explore the part that is to the north of that great river, as he had only been able to do this in the southern part, due to the reasons that Escandón

³⁹⁷ Hierro, Diario, folios 221v6-223r8.

expressed in his earlier report, as well as to not abandon the settlement in its beginning stages, due to it being surrounded by so many natives. Now that the settlers are in the process of constructing their dwellings, tending their livestock, opening irrigation channels and preparing their crops, Escandón dispatched an official with twenty soldiers and Antonio de Castro, a resident skilled in maritime affairs and other sailors, to explore the area to the north of the great river. Their journey was easy due to the road being opened without woods, marshes, or any other obstacle impeding it, and they arrived at the Voca where they had previously been with Escandón, on the other side, where it is verified that there is no other bay, as the small one that was found to the south is completely closed in with sandbars.³⁹⁸

Escandón continues that said Voca is about 150 *varas* wide and forms two points of land that are not very tall and about 200 *varas* wide. In the middle there is a large bay where the river enters and where a deep channel forms up to the same barra where a very narrow sandbar that seems to extend along entire said *voca* enters, leaving only three *varas* depth in the shallowest part, and according to what he is able to judge, it is about a quarter of a league at high tide, but it does not seem difficult to breach said bank due to being narrow. Although various sand bars are observed in the bay, its channel appears to be sufficiently deep, as does the river in the fifteen leagues that the sea extends up through it, protected with good coverage and woods. At a distance of about seven leagues from the sea, there are good stopping places to settle along both sides of the Voca, and due to this, Escandón does not doubt in what they are attempting. Because

³⁹⁸ Escandón, Autos, folios 325v4-326r10.

there was still no satisfaction with the natives that live along both banks, and due to the amount of things that Escandón still needed to do, it did not seem appropriate to him to remain in that location in order to undertake a more profound discovery that can be conducted later without risk and with less expense once the large boat or canoes are constructed, and for this same reason he wrote to Campeche through Tampico and ordered that the boat that he had requested not come.³⁹⁹

Hierro's version of these events differs. He notes that Captain Leal was sent with a picket of fifteen soldiers and some friendly natives to examine the stopping place in the Cienegas de Caballero where the town of Burgos should be founded, and that among those who went was the Captain Santiago. These men surprisingly returned five days later because the road is twenty-five leagues long and this is the same road that goes to Linares. Hierro did not know what reason Captain Leal gave the colonel; all he knew was that Captain Leal arrived disconsolate at the stopping place, and that when Leal was alone with Hierro, Captain Leal told him that there was not much water, and that it was salty, and that even though the Conchas River is nearby, it is very deep and there are few places to raise crops and that everything else is rocky terrain, and it is very mountainous. Hierro reports that he did not know the reason for which they did not try to found this settlement, whose captain and families were prepared. Hierro remarks that perhaps the cause was the lack of maize that at the present time was great in the kingdom, although the colonel told Hierro that Captain Leal would go with his soldiers and families to found it in July. What is true, in Hierro's opinion, is that it would be more convenient

³⁹⁹ Escandón, Autos, folios326r11-326v12.

for the settlement to be located on the road to Linares toward la Barra and Santander, and being there, it will serve as security, and the mission will be able to have many natives from the Borrados and Cadinás nations and other natives that live in Tamaulipa.⁴⁰⁰

Hierro also includes additional information regarding these dates that Escandón does not include. He notes that during the days of Semana Santa, he and Escandón were in Santander. Some people confessed and on Holy Thursday, it was fortunate for the religious to be able to say mass, as much for the shelter from the branches covering the altar and the light being unable to penetrate, as for the north wind and the rain the party experienced during these days. After these days, the journey was continued on the Saturday of Glory, which happened when they arrived at the Juntas River Pass.⁴⁰¹

Escandón continues documenting the preliminary colonization of Nuevo Santander, noting that with everything necessary for the settlement of Burgos and its Queto Mission for the Cienegas de Caballero instead of the one for Las Caldas, due to the reasons that he expressed, and because more than eighty families of apostates and gentiles are already gathered in the frontiers of the Kingdom of León, and on the 5th day of April, he marched to the town of Padilla where he found that the settlers were very disconsolate due to having covered up the hole where water was able to be removed, due to lack of knowing what to do. They had determined they were unable to discover another one, but after Escandón dedicated himself, as he has done in the rest of the

⁴⁰⁰ Hierro, Diario, folios 222r10-222v11.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., folio 223r8-15.

settlements, directing them and showing them what to do, they found it to be very easy, for which reason they were content and pleased.

Almost all of the native captains who had attacked Escandón's party in the San Antonio de los Llanos and the Linares frontier up to this point gathered here at this settlement. A few of these had been with him. Escandón clothed them, gave them gifts, and provided maize in place of the religious, so that they are able to sustain themselves and the ones who were gathering at the Guarnizo Mission, which he left designated a short distance away, while they plant their crops. Escandón adds that the town of San Francisco de Güemes, to which twelve settlers have been added without cost, is good, and he believes it will soon be a large settlement.⁴⁰²

Hierro continues to provide additional detail, noting that on Easter Sunday, during the morning, he and his party arrived at the settlement of San Antonio de Padilla, where Father Saenz came out to receive them on foot near the settlement with the Marques de Aisa who was in this settlement. They fed them breakfast. This captain had been traveling observing lands with the administrator, the steward, and other soldiers, and on this trip, they arrived at Santander by chance before Semana Santa, and from here they returned with the answers to the letters that the Marques had sent to the colonel. From here Friar José de Soto returned to the college passing through San Francisco de Güemes to San Antonio de los Llanos, and he left from Soledad to Zacatecas along the same route from which he had come. Near the Juntas River Pass, where the camp was placed on the Saturday of Glory, farther downstream, there is a large deep place through

⁴⁰² Escandón, Autos, folios 326v11-327r12.

which the river runs, and there is a very dense wooded area where Captain Toro's *ranchería* is located. This is the one who came out with his people, and although he was seen, he did not want to join the party as they were traveling to the Cerrito del Aire. A few days earlier those natives had killed a soldier from the Marques' squad. On this return trip, as they were preparing to eat, the natives came into sight. It was arranged for them to join the Spaniards, and only Captain Toro came with three natives, who were silent and were shaking from fear. They were given something to eat, and they later returned to their *ranchería*, which was about a half a league away.

Friar Simón went to the *ranchería*, and the natives all scattered into the ravines and only the four native men and another four native women remained. These were given some provisions, but it was not possible for the others to come near the camp, and they stayed behind, and Hierro reports that they did not see them again. These natives from Toro's group and some others have been joining the party on earlier days and even some women with their children to the settlement of Padilla. The father and captain had given maize to some of them, and they later returned, but it is feared that they only came to examine the party, because some Janambre natives have been seen among them, and they are their enemies, and now they have been seen together. A Mesquite tribe captain was among these, but he never arrived where the Spaniards were located, and he is known for being a hunter. The Mesquite captain was later brought to the colonel either by force or through deceit. The Spaniards gave him a cane and clothing, and it was arranged for him to bring his people who were not far from this settlement. For this reason, they gave him a horse upon which to ride, and he went, and he never returned,

nor did the others who usually joined the party before that time. The soldiers had not designated a place for the mission, and now it is said that it will be placed in a different location when they find a good stopping place. Hierro reports that he does not know what name they gave it.⁴⁰³

Escandón continues his report, noting that on the 11th day, he traveled to the town of Santa María de Llera where he arrived on the 13th in the morning.⁴⁰⁴ Hierro provides additional detail regarding the journey, noting that the distance traveled was eight leagues. In the middle of this journey, the party crossed the Santa Engracia River, which is the same one as in the settlement of San Francisco de Guemes, four leagues upstream on the right hand side of our path. A dwelling was built near the Mesas Prietas. Hierro notes that near here was where they killed the soldier from the Marques' squad.

On the 12th, the party traveled about nine leagues to Las Cruces. The road straight to Monte Alverne and El Jaumave comes out from a nearly empty watering hole and there are two paths, but they continued traveling toward the east. On the 13th, they traveled about five leagues. The path is very uneven. It heads up a rocky steep slope, and later along a long plateau from where the Tetillas are observable, and farther ahead the Sierra de Tamaulipa and that of La Huasteca are seen. Later it descends from the plateau through a rocky and steep slope, and later along flat terrain, and at about a league's distance, one crosses the river that comes from Jaumave, and the settlement of Santa María de Llera is located there. This is the first settlement that the colonel founded on the expedition. It is about twenty leagues away from San Francisco de

⁴⁰³ Hierro, Diario, folios 223r8-224r20.

⁴⁰⁴ Escandón, Autos, folio 327r12-13.

Guëmes and about twenty-two leagues from Padilla according to the journeys of our travels. The Sierra de Tamaulipa is twelve leagues to the north, and to the south, the Sierra that runs from the Kingdom of Huasteca is about one league away. The river is voluminous. The settlement is on the same bank, and there is a very thick wooded area nearby with tall trees from which wood can be supplied for the dwellings and for the settlement.

Five small native girls were brought to the settlement. Three of these died from chicken pox after Friar Simón baptized them. The captain, along with some settlers and some drunken natives came out to meet the colonel at about a league. A soldier from the Guadalcazar company drowned while bathing in the river. The Father Friar Simón buried him and the four above mentioned Mecos toddlers. In this settlement, aside from the soldiers, there are about thirty families of settlers. There are also many fleas in this settlement.⁴⁰⁵

Escandón continues his report, after having arrived at Santa María on April 13. With regard to the settlers, he notes that in general, the settlers are poor, but they have worked with such care, as much in the construction of their houses as for the removal of water, that the settlement is very advanced and they have encircled it with a strong stockade three *varas* tall to protect themselves from the Janambres who live on the frontier. At first, the Janambres gave the settlers plenty to do, but the good conduct of their captain, José Escajadillo, in the nine entries he has made over them, and with the deaths of several of them has taught them a lesson in such a way that they rarely appear

⁴⁰⁵ Hierro, Diario, folios 224r20-225v3.

anymore.⁴⁰⁶ Hierro adds that eighteen to twenty natives have a *ranchería* here, but they are from the Jaumave Mission and from Santa Clara in the Río Verde jurisdiction.⁴⁰⁷

Escandón continues his report, noting that the only damage that has happened was to a soldier who, during one of the attacks, received twenty-two arrow wounds; he is almost healed after having swallowed some pieces of flint. The friendly natives that Escandón left gathered there have remained and have helped out, and according to the benefits of the land, this settlement will be large, especially if the mines they are working a half a league from there take shape, and it seems they will, which will contribute greatly, as a good road to El Jaumave is quickly achieved, and Escandón was currently working on this.⁴⁰⁸

Escandón reports that while in Santa María de Llera, he received a letter from Captain Francisco Barberena in which he advised Escandón from Horcasitas that it was a good settlement, as was Altamira, and Santa Barbara in Tanguanchin, and that there was nothing new to report. In three days Escandón will travel to these settlements, and with this trek of the journey complete, leaving everything that he considered necessary at that time, he will leave for Tula in order to prepare a new settlement at a mining camp that there is in the stopping place Pátano,⁴⁰⁹ twelve leagues inside the Sierra Madre to the north near said Tula Mission. The settlers have asked Escandón for this settlement since the month of November, and at the present time Escandón reports that it has been undertaken with the protection of the established settlements. The metals of this

⁴⁰⁶ Escandón, Autos, folio, 327r12-25.

⁴⁰⁷ Hierro, Diario, folio 224v22-225r1.

⁴⁰⁸ Escandón, Autos, folios 327r26-327v8.

⁴⁰⁹ This is the site of Real de los Infantes.

mineral, which he has seen many times, are very abundant and are of good alloy, and the miners generally remove four ounces per sheet, which they have done on different occasions and times, because they have left due to the risk from the barbarous natives, who, at the present time are living there. These are intelligent miners who have made repeated attempts to succeed, and they have the goods in order to root themselves there, for which reason the settlement will be extremely useful in this stopping place due to there being nothing else in said Sierra, and without any cost to the royal *hacienda*. Escandón granted this and notes that he will promote it, so that it is achieved.

Two religious have been sent from the Apostolic College of Guadalupe de Zacatecas to the settlements that correspond to this college, and one of them has accompanied Escandón as much for saying mass as for administering the rest of the sacraments in the event they were needed. His orders have not yet arrived nor did Escandón believe that they would arrive before October, due to the general drought that is occurring. These religious were unable to find a pack train to transport them along the roads, for which reason Escandón supplied them with beans, tools, and oxen in some places, so that planting this year, even though it is only a little, they will be able to harvest enough maize to sustain themselves, which is what assures the success of the settlements, and will greatly contribute to its conservation. From this Apostolic College of San Fernando, no religious has appeared, nor has Escandón heard that they will soon arrive. He attributes this to the great scarcity with which they are found, and as those who are expected to arrive any day from Spain have not yet arrived. The ones from Padilla have served in the town of Güemes, and even in this one Tula notwithstanding

the distance of twenty leagues. The religious confessed the people so that they fulfill their obligation according to the precepts of the church, but they will remain in great disconsolation until said religious arrive.

Escandón reports that the settlements established up to this point are well prepared, and with probable security of their permanence, within a few years this will be a large colony with much commerce due to its fertility, good temperament, salt, fish, and mainly the heads of livestock it will produce. That of Tetillas, which number 87 from his report from 1747 contains was not founded, due to having discovered that the location had little water and other reasons that he will fully explain when he informs the viceroy, which he will do as soon as possible.

Escandón ends his report on April 17, 1749 from Santa María de Llera, by advising the viceroy that he received his letter from February 6th in Santander in which he informed Escandón of what he had determined regarding the land and other items of importance for settling this new province, to which Escandón reports that he will conform. Escandón also reports having received a second letter from the viceroy dated April 2nd, in which the viceroy considered Escandón's request to push the religious missionaries on the point of administration of the civilian settlements and missions founded in this region. Escandón reports that he gave the viceroy's letter to the missionaries so that they follow his order.⁴¹⁰

Escandón resumes his reports in late April, noting that he had gone to the city of Horcasitas, which he found in good condition with all its families of settlers, squads to

⁴¹⁰ Escandón, Autos, folios 327v9-328v14.

guard it, and about sixty families of Olives and Huasteca natives from the frontier. From there, he marched to Altamira, which is located in a portion of land along the bank of a large *laguna* that the river forms from El Jaumave running through Llera, through the entire valley of Las Ruzias and Horcasitas, which extends as it is going to enter the Barra de Tampico, which is six to seven leagues in the southern part. He traveled not only to said barra, but also up to Tampico and Panuco in small boats and canoes, which the new settlers have in abundance. He found the settlers rooted with their dwellings and 4,000 head of livestock, cattle and horses. The abundance of goods, the good terrain, the nearby *salinas* and fishing waters persuade Escandón that this will be a great place in a short amount of time, once the natives, who are found with a reasonable disposition for this effect, are dominated, and to this end Escandón found himself providing the corresponding supplies of which he will inform the viceroy. Here, Francisco de Soto Troncoso, Mayor of these frontiers, came to see Escandón. He has certainly behaved well as far as promoting the expedition, much to the contrary of others who have done as much damage as they have been able.⁴¹¹

Hierro provides additional details for the dates in April, adding that on Sunday the 20th of April, after mass, the party continued traveling. They traveled ten leagues to the river's bank. This river is the same one from Llera. It has its origin in El Jaumave, and now it is even more voluminous, and downstream it joins two others that emerge from the pastures, also in the sierra that the party is presently descending to the southern part. The most direct road in this part is to the town of Los Valles, and in the northern

⁴¹¹ Ibid., folio 335r2-33.

part Hierro reports that they are able to see the Sierra de Tamaulipa, the one of Huasteca. In the southern part, there are many *lagunas* and marshes that extend to the east. Its currents run toward Tampico, and they are almost continual.⁴¹²

Escandón continues his report, noting that from Altamira he will go to explore the Tancanequí stopping place in the Panuco frontier where the old presidio was located. At the present time some *rancherías* are there and they are arranged in such a way that natives from the *rancherías* can be placed in that stopping place, and being in the vicinity of the one of Horcasitas, it is located fourteen leagues to the north of Panuco on the banks of the named river, and as it has this, this mountain range remains completely surrounded and protected, which is very important, especially for the security of the Christian provinces, as well as for driving out the barbarous natives and the apostates. Next, he will continue to Horcasitas, and without deviating, he will return to Llera in order to punish a *ranchería* of natives, who, due to the oversight of a sheppard, killed a settler and drove others away. From there he will go to Santa Barbara, and if time permits, he will explore the mines in Tamaulipa.

Escandón concludes his reports to the viceroy from Altamira on April 30, noting that in the rest of the settlements, there is only the news that some natives in Santander shot arrows at four horses, and with Captain Guevara punishing them with the death of five of these natives, he advises Escandón that this left the natives very humbled.

⁴¹² Hierro, Diario, folio 225v3-16.

Escandón concludes his report, noting that he will advise the viceroy of everything else that is occurring.⁴¹³

Friar Hierro provides additional detail regarding the party's activities in late April. He notes that on the 25th, the party crossed the river that comes from Jaumave. They traveled only eight leagues and they arrived at Horcasitas. The entire route is flat. Captain Berberena came out with his soldiers to receive the party about a league out. The settlement is very large; it is comprised of ninety families, thirty people of reason, thirty Huasteco natives, and thirty from the Olives nation. These are meek and live in settlements. The settlement's planting land is good. It is located in the plain of a low-lying hill. The three living areas were divided in a crescent shape. The settlers' dwellings are the most rugged, made in the shape of round gourds, and have plant stalks that serve as beams, but the stalks are mixed with dried mud. The captain's dwelling is decent, although it was not entirely finished. The water supply is a *laguna* that is about an arcabuzes' shot distant from the dwellings down from the hill. The chapel is a small shack. The captain is José Oyarvide, a Bizcayan. On this occasion, a religious Bizcayan, Friar Juan de Eulasia, from the Tampico jurisdiction, was here. He entered as the priest from Captain Berberena's company. This man, along with Captain Berberena and his soldiers, accompanied the colonel on their journey due to a company from Valle and some other soldiers from the Guadalcazar company having left Las Ruzias.

Hierro's party continued their journey on the 23rd to Altamira. On the first day in the afternoon they traveled only two leagues up to the San Juan River, the next day ten

⁴¹³ Escandón, Autos, folios 335r34-335v30.

leagues up to some pools of water, the next day about eight leagues to some marshes, in a stopping place called Tuna, and from here four leagues to Altamira. Hierro notes that this settlement has good land for planting. All of the dwellings are *jacales*. The settlers are mulatos, and the Captain is Juan Pérez. The water is more distant from the living quarters than in Horcasitas, and in some leagues that join with the Tampico River, it runs along them, and there are twelve leagues of distance from the port where a sea captain who came to the settlement will be captain. The teaching father from Tampico, the mayor from Tontoyuca, Francisco Troncoso, and a lawyer named Maldonado, also came to visit. One may also travel along the water up to Tamuy, near the town of Valles, and also up to Panuco. On the northern side of the coast, very near this settlement, at about four leagues out, there are some other *salinas* that are called those from Tampico.

On the 1st of May, Nuestra Señora de las Calzadas was founded. Everything was done as in the other settlements: mass was sung, and it was also the day of the Holy Cross. Here there were many sea bass, small shrimp, and bananas that the sea captain brought. There are many mosquitoes, ticks, and chiggers. The route, according to the journeys traveled, is about twenty-four leagues from Horcasitas, but it has been with lots of turns, traversing some *lagunas*. There could be about eighteen leagues in a straight path, but one must cross a very thick closed wooded area. The return trip was along another route, and it was longer to return to Horcasitas. The first trip, which was the 4th of May, was four leagues to Tuna.

The fifth day, with some deviations, the party traveled about nine leagues to Tancasnequi. This was previously a town in the Tampico jurisdiction. It was deserted,

and later don Benito placed a presidio there with the intent of working the mines, which they say are in Tamaulipa. The settlement did not last long, and as a sign that it was once there, he left two large pieces of artillery that were approximately two *varas* long. The river that runs toward Tampico is there and there are various *lagunas* throughout a large space until reaching those from Altamira on the side of Tampico, and upstream they join the other ones, which caused them to make deviations.

Captain Berberena left to see some Palahuecos natives with a picket of thirty soldiers on the road from Altamira to Horcasitas from this stopping place Tancasnequi. He returned to Maguaque on the same afternoon, which is the new place to which they had moved their camp. He brought the captains with many native men and women with their children, which is a sign that they came with good will. The soldiers say that these natives have never done harm, and that they were with don Benito when he had settlers in the Tancasnequi Presidio. From Maguaques, Hierro and his party returned to the San Juan River, and he arrived at Horcasitas on May 7th, where he notes that the Palahuecos also arrived. Hierro reports that the Spaniards gave the native chiefs canes and overcoats, and to many others they gave black blankets, tobacco, rosary trinkets, and it was determined they would give them a settlement and a place to plant about three leagues distant from the settlement that the natives themselves went to see.

The colonel and Captain Berberena went with the natives to the San Juan River, near a mountain top that is in front of the settlement, and it is surrounded by very thick woods all along its skirt, and in the middle a high knoll that is called Bernal de Horcasitas is formed. Another mountain top is formed in this way near the Castejo

pasture lands that are visible in front of Tamaulipa, very near Las Ruzias or the town of Llera. These Palahuecos provide much hope, and they also serve as security for the settlement of Horcasitas.

On the 9th day, Hierro reports that the city of Horcasitas was founded in the same manner and with the same details as the rest of the towns. Here, mail arrived from Llera in which Captain Escajadillo advised that some Janambre natives had taken 3,000 sheep from the Carmelite Fathers' *ranchería* and that they had killed the sheppard, for which reason the steward asked for assistance. Captain Escajadillo, some settlers, soldiers, and natives, followed the Janambres, and the Janambres not only took away the sheep, but they also killed the steward and a soldier from the settlement. Finally realizing the danger, many of Captain Escajadillo's party who went after the Janambres fled to safety, and they left a small stone mortar that a soldier was carrying in the field. The natives took the two heads, and the bodies of the three dead men: sheppard, steward, and soldier remained there.

The soldiers planned to attack the Janambres here, for which reason the settlers from San Francisco de Güemes were readied, and Captain Guevara wanted to add one hundred soldiers from these settlements with the friendly natives from his settlement, and those from El Jaumave, where they had already been notified. Said Escajadillo also advised Captain Guevara from Santander and Captain Paz from Padilla who were on a campaign on the other side of the river due to the natives having shot some arrows at some livestock. Of these natives, it was known that Captain Guevara removed 100 sheep from them. The Toro natives overtook him from where they have their *ranchería*

close to the Juntas, and Captain Paz was injured. At this same time, two soldiers, who were on horseback, reached the colonel, and near the Tamatan pasture lands, the natives had taken away their horses and they only brought the letter with which they were sent. Before all this news, the colonel was preparing to go out to explore some mines that they say are located in Tamaulipa, for which reason fifty soldiers were prepared to depart the following day. Escandón's departure was frustrated by these events, and it was decided that these fifty soldiers and another fifty that had joined the soldiers and settlers from Horcasitas would go attack the Janambres that are near the Tamatan pasture lands, and although no one knew for certain where they were, because they did not know the route along the river and the pasture lands are surrounded by marshes, a native who was in custody said that he knew the path very well, and that he would take them straight to the *ranchería*.

Captain Berberena was the primary captain, and the native was his guide. The soldiers attacked the natives at dawn, and they were caught sleeping. They killed four of the natives, and the rest fled. They took back the horses that the natives had taken from the soldiers, and another ten horses, seeing that they were lost. The soldiers went into the river, and from the other banks some natives were yelling to another native captain who they knew. These natives threatened to burn his village, and told him that as soon as the soldiers entered the water, that they should attack the soldiers and that they would begin killing the soldiers little by little, and that they would save them, because they would be unable to cross the river.

Hierro continues this entry, noting that the soldiers returned to Horcasitas. Captain Escajadillo was to attack the natives who were in the pasture lands of Castrejon on the other side, but the plan was frustrated because the friendly native, who was his guide and who he trusted, informed the natives when he was not watching him, and they began to shoot arrows. This native and two others are headed to Querétaro to purge their sins.

In Horcasitas and in Altamira, Friar Simón confessed all the settlers and soldiers who had not fulfilled their obligation to the church. Father Saenz confessed those in the town of Llera with Father García, and also in the settlements of San Francisco Güemes.

Hierro reports that on the 14th of May, in order to leave the city of Horcasitas, the party crossed the river that is more than a half a league from the settlement. The river was full of water, and they crossed it in a large canoe. Due to the delay resulting from the entire party crossing the river, Hierro and his party only walked about forty leagues to the Charco Azul. Captain Berberena's company accompanied them during this journey, as did Father Eulasia and his party on the 15th. Everyone walked together about ten leagues near the Tamatan pasture lands, which are opposite the Sierra, which the party is now entering. Hierro continues that he and his party passed through Causillo through Tanchipa, and in Chamal Valley they constructed a dwelling near some small pools of water. On the 16th, they passed the opening to Tamalabe. The journey is about four leagues, and they arrived at the new settlement of Tanguanchin, which is in the other valley. This old town was Villa de los Valles previously, and Captain Berberena was placed in charge of it. He has many natives who gather to pray every day with a

teacher that said captain had provided them. There is also a corporal with some citizens for whom they have designated a place to live. The town was founded about a league from this place in the same manner as the other settlements in the very old town's chapel. Hierro reports that he did not see the place of the settlement for the town that has to be placed there, nor does he know what name they gave it.

Hierro continues his diary, noting that the town of Nuestra Señora de la Soledad is near a low-lying hill. At about a league away, it has some mountainous hilltops where the valley closes off in the eastern part, and on the western side, the valley extends up to the Villa de los Valles more than fifteen leagues. Hierro notes that the same thing occurs in the two previous valleys that they crossed: Chamal and Tanchipa. The town's temple is very humid, the earth is very fertile for maize, the watering hole is very shallow, and the part that comes down from the hill is very muddy, for which reason the water for the dwellings is distant. Here all the settlers and soldiers gathered to confess and fulfill their obligations with the church. Four natives who asked to be married were married and were veiled at the nuptial mass. Only eighteen young natives of about seventeen years and younger were baptized. The older ones somewhat knew the prayers and some of the doctrine. All of this was performed on the 19th in order to honor San José. The people of the settlement sang mass and celebrated all day, and the founding of the settlement was finished by singing the Alabado.

On the 20th, Hierro reports that the party walked three leagues to Laxa. There is another valley there; it has a chapel. There are some natives and many residents. The natives plant and raise lots of maize. The residents are from the town of Tula.

On the 21st, the party walked about nine leagues to the town of Tula. This town already belongs to the Río Verde district. This river does not have much water, but the small pools are permanent for two leagues. There is a *laguna* and there are some small watering holes. On the western side, the Valley of Maize is twenty leagues distant. One travels through the Valley of Tears and through the dry Moctezuma Laguna and on the western side atop the sierra, the Pamillas Mission is located. According to Hierro, Jaumave and Tula are on this same sierra. There is a new mining camp on the sierra called Pátano. An order was left here for the colonists to found the settlement of Siete Infantes in honor of San Miguel. A captain who they charged to bring families was designated and he remained there. The captain is the son of the one who is founding the mines, and he was given the title of nuncio and was given possession of the settlement. Hierro notes that he and his party spent Easter here. The company from the Valley of Maize left, and the company of soldiers from Tula remained. Captain Berberena and his company from Los Huatecos and from the Villa de los Valles left for the town of Tancahuitz traveling to it with Father Eulasia, and only the company from Guadalcazar remained with the colonel.

On Wednesday, the 28th, after Easter, the party continued walking and the journey was eight leagues. The land is already very dry, but there are pools of rain water at intervals. At about four leagues there is the Piedra Untada pool of water. There is not a settlement, nor any pool of water in Siete Tinajas. Six leagues ahead is the Buenavista pool of water where they spent the 29th, and a dwelling in Quelital, where there are some ranches. The 20th was spent in the lands of Acuña among the Turbiarte, which are some

ranches, and the party arrived at San Isidro, which are ranches about four leagues from Guadalcázar. On Saturday, the 31st of May, from here the party continued their travels to Querétaro through the Poitillos *hacienda*, and Friar Simón said mass on Sunday, and on Monday the journey was continued about four leagues. Hierro reports that they slept in the countryside, and the next day they went to Guadarraya. On Wednesday, they passed through the town of Herionda, where it rained, and they walked to Las Cruces ranch, where they rested, and they said mass on the day of Corpus. On Friday morning, they crossed the watering hole of Santa María through Saravía. They slept in the countryside, and the next, day passing through Heriondilla and Ramos, they arrived in the afternoon at the Cerro de Santiago. On Sunday, the religious said mass and from here, on Tuesday, Hierro and his party arrived at the College in the morning around ten o'clock on the 3rd day of June, having travelled for six months.⁴¹⁴

⁴¹⁴ Hierro, Diario, folios 225v16-231v18.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

Escandón's approach to the colonization of the Province of Nuevo Santander was unique in many ways. The conceptual design for settling Nuevo Santander deviated from the traditional colonization plan implemented in settlements in New Spain, primarily due to the omission of presidios near missions. Traditionally, missionaries would spread the gospel to natives, who, once converted, would gather in missions where the religious fathers would instruct them. Soldiers were housed in presidios near the missions to protect the missionaries. These troops provided the physical strength needed to thwart native revolts when and if necessary. The soldiers' families often accompanied them to the frontier. Merchants followed the soldiers and their families to sell them goods, and farmers were given land in the vicinity to grow crops to sustain the Spanish subjects. As a result, civilian settlements grew near the presidios and missions.⁴¹⁵ It should be noted that in this traditional design, the missions were heavily involved in raising livestock to sustain the mission inhabitants.

The unique colonization plan that Escandón implemented upset the dual reliance of missionaries and soldiers and their respective entities. By delaying the founding of the missions for the natives near the civilian settlements, Escandón effectively excluded any participation of natives in the colonization of Nuevo Santander. Although Escandón did pay lip service to the natives during his exploration of the *Seno Mexicano*, his plan strategically excluded them from incorporation into the newly developed society.

⁴¹⁵ Odie B. Faulk, "The Presidio: Fortress or Farce?" *Journal of the West*, (1969) 8: 22-37: 22.

Escandón was fully aware of the threat native resistance posed for the implementation of his plan, and isolating the natives in settlements distant from the civilian ones was one means to lessen this threat.

Although Escandón mentions instruction in the Catholic faith for the natives of the region as part of his plan, he does not mention their incorporation into the society of Nuevo Santander.⁴¹⁶ Further, he remarks on the need to reduce the rebellious natives by force if they continue to resist Spanish authority, noting that “after the settlements have been founded, it will be the opportune time to defeat the natives who rebelliously abused the benefits of the settlement and have fled.”⁴¹⁷ Due to these continued rebellions, Escandón concluded that “the best way to achieve peace with the natives until the settlements can be founded is to offer peace to them under the condition that they remain in that barbarous life. If after the settlements are founded, they continue to revolt, and they do not gather in towns and missions, they will be treated as apostates, enemies of the crown.”⁴¹⁸ Those who were unwilling to leave “that barbarous life” once the civilian settlements were established, and who were considered rebellious, were killed as enemies of the crown.

Escandón recommended founding settlements for the natives who were not considered rebellious in a location separate from the civilian settlements. For the Comecrudo and Boca Prietas tribes, for example, he proposed founding a settlement near

⁴¹⁶ Escandón, José de Escandón, Informe al Virrey (Archivo General de la Nación, Provincias Internas), vol. 179, folios 145r-195r, folios 158v15-19.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid., folio 306r18-20.

⁴¹⁸ Ibid., folios 190r21-190v8.

the bank of the Río del Norte.⁴¹⁹ This settlement would be downstream from Camargo, the civilian settlement in the same area, but would be separate from it.⁴²⁰ By separating the natives and civilian settlers for each of the new villas, Escandón effectively excluded the natives from incorporation into the newly founded civilian settlements in Nuevo Santander. Further, he specifically articulates founding the civilian settlements in the middle of the natives, and explains his reasoning behind this:

founding settlements will free the area with better security as the settlements will be in the middle of the native settlements, and those of the named New Kingdom. There will be open roads, frequented by soldiers going to these destinations, and without the asylum of the coast, it is not only indispensable that the natives become peaceful, but they also lose hope of a new revolt.⁴²¹

This would lessen the danger of united uprisings.⁴²² Decreasing the threat of native attacks on Spanish settlers in Nuevo Santander also contributed to the success of the civilian settlements, which in turn allowed the settlers to focus their energies on the ranching operations that they brought with them.

In proposing his colonization plan, Escandón recommended that the fathers delay taking the natives to the missions until the natives were well instructed. Once they were subjected to sociable and political life, then the priests could gather the natives in the missions.⁴²³ Even before its inception, Escandón's colonization plan infuriated the Franciscans from the Franciscan College of San Fernando in Mexico City, who protested

⁴¹⁹ Ibid., folios 180v28-181r4

⁴²⁰ Ibid., folios 180r27-180v2

⁴²¹ Ibid., folios 190r24-190v4

⁴²² Hubert J. Miller, *José de Escandón: Colonizer of Nuevo Santander* (Edinburg: New Santander Press, 1980), 13.

⁴²³ Escandón, Informe, folio 173v5-8.

its illegality and refused to participate in the venture. While Franciscans from the College of Guadalupe de Zacatecas did sign on and established a dozen missions in Nuevo Santander, they soon came to regret their decision.⁴²⁴ According to Weber, “by declining to establish traditional missions, in which priests had control of native lives and property, Escandón had violated the law and parted from tradition.”⁴²⁵ The Franciscan fathers lived in the civilian settlements and served the Spanish residents there. They did not live among the natives nor did they indoctrinate them, as was traditionally practiced.⁴²⁶

Due to stipulations in colonial law, Escandón could not formally avoid the evangelization and reduction of the natives living in the area, however. Since the late sixteenth century, colonial expansion had been linked to the spread of the gospel, at least theoretically. In order to legitimize the enterprise and establish his privileges as a colonizer, Escandón found it indispensable to employ missionaries, who, furthermore, also proved useful to him in inspiring confidence among the new settlers and preventing them from deserting on the pretext that they lacked access to the holy sacraments that they required.⁴²⁷ Escandón founded missions for the aid of the Spanish communities only when it promised to gather a good number of natives capable of being utilized as a free labor force on the livestock estates of the prominent men of the territory.⁴²⁸ He did

⁴²⁴ David J. Weber, *Bárbaros: Spaniards and Their Savages in the Age of Enlightenment* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 106.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, 107.

⁴²⁶ Gabriel Saldívar, *Historia Compendiada de Tamaulipas* (Mexico: Archivo General de la Nación, 1945), 9.

⁴²⁷ Patricia Osante, *Orígenes del Nuevo Santander (1748-1772)* (Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de México, 1997), 239.

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*

this without granting the possession of the lands to the Franciscans in the name of the natives, effectively undercutting the missionaries' authority and influence in the region, which, in turn, allowed the civilian ranchers to develop their livestock raising enterprises.

Escandón's manipulation of the missionaries and the traditional function of the missions contributed to a lack of a complete understanding of the local indigenous problem. This, in turn, contributed to the resurgence of hostilities between natives and colonists, and eventually lead to extermination of the natives who were labeled as rebellious.⁴²⁹ Either by killing off the rebellious natives or excluding them through the colonization design, the natives of Nuevo Santander played a minimal role in the development of the region once the preliminary exploration was complete. As Donald Chipman notes, Escandón enjoyed long-range success because "his undertaking was not as dependent on the cooperation of recalcitrant natives."⁴³⁰ They were not provided the opportunity to incorporate into the newly developed society, as was the case in the development of neighboring provinces.

Another unique aspect of Escandón's colonization plan was the omission of presidios. In the colonization of Nuevo Santander conducted under Escandón, for the first and only time in the settlement of New Spain, officials relied on colonists rather than missionaries and soldiers to settle a new territory.⁴³¹ Escandón selected colonists who dedicated themselves to raising crops and livestock, and who were also capable of

⁴²⁹ Juan Fidel Zorrilla, *El Poder Colonial en Nuevo Santander* (Mexico City: Manuel Porrúa, 1976), 9.

⁴³⁰ Donald E. Chipman and Harriet Denise Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999), 169.

⁴³¹ David J. Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 194.

defending themselves against native attacks and who could make the transition from farmer or rancher to soldier at any given moment.⁴³² In theory, due to the belief that these civilian settlers could protect themselves, there was no need to erect presidios near the civilian settlements or missions for protection. Further, Escandón was opposed to utilizing presidios in Nuevo Santander, as he believed the manner in which they were currently administered in neighboring frontier provinces had led to corruption and had contributed to desertion by the soldiers.

Due to his military experience, Escandón was acutely aware of the challenges that soldiers faced while living on the frontier. Oftentimes soldiers were defenseless against exploitation by military and civilian officials who controlled their economic livelihoods and forced the soldiers to be entirely dependent upon them. Instead, for Nuevo Santander, Escandón proposed the new civilian settlements should be “totally independent of the neighboring frontier governors and mayors.”⁴³³ He notes that “the soldiers and settlers often desert the presidios and settlements due to suffering abuses at the hands of the governors and *alcaldes mayores*, who force them to buy titles to land and then steal them back from them, or tell them the titles are worthless after they have purchased them.”⁴³⁴ By omitting presidios from the colonization plan for Nuevo Santander, Escandón essentially undercut the importance of military administration for the region. As governors and *alcalde mayores* who had exploited soldiers in other presidios were excluded from his colonization plan, new power holders emerged. These

⁴³² Saldívar, *Historia Compendiada*, 8-9.

⁴³³ Escandón, Informe, folio 173v8-13.

⁴³⁴ Ibid., folio 173v11-16.

new power holders happened to be men who were engaged in civilian ranching in neighboring provinces. Escandón's recruitment of ranchers as settlers for colonization efforts in Nuevo Santander shaped the economic development of the region due to their ties to ranching.⁴³⁵

Raising livestock had been an integral part of colonization efforts in New Spain from the beginning, as ranching practices have their origins in the colonial and Iberian past.⁴³⁶ Stock raising played an important role in sustaining Spanish subjects while new societies in the interior provinces of Mexico began to develop. As New Spain continued to expand northward from Mexico City, expeditions were sent out into the unexplored areas. During these expeditions, Spanish soldiers often drove herds of livestock alongside the expeditionary party in order to ensure the party's survival from meat these herds provided. Once presidios and missions were founded in the newly explored provinces, civilian settlements soon followed, and missionaries and civilians alike practiced the raising of livestock.

In the first half of the eighteenth century, however, the missions – not the military or civilian elements of colonial society – conducted most of the stock raising carried out on the northern frontier.⁴³⁷ In Texas, it was the Franciscan missionaries who

⁴³⁵ Joe S. Graham, "The Built Environment in South Texas: The Hispanic Legacy," in Helen Simons and Cathryn A. Hoyt, eds. *Hispanic Texas: A Historical Guide* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992), 59-75, 59.

⁴³⁶ Armando Alonzo, *Tejano Legacy: Rancheros and Settlers in South Texas, 1734-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), 274.

⁴³⁷ Jack Jackson, *Los Mesteños: Spanish Ranching in Texas, 1721-1821* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1986), 12.

first practiced stock raising.⁴³⁸ Franciscan missions, particularly those at La Bahía and Béxar, developed herds and flocks large enough to require the construction of ranch compounds.⁴³⁹

While the missions dominated early livestock raising in the Provincia de Tejas, a different, and in many ways unique, development began along the Río Grande. The newly founded society in Nuevo Santander was built on continuities to the colonial heritage, but experienced adaptations to new challenges in settling the new lands, leading to opportunities in ranching and trade.⁴⁴⁰ As this society emerged, livestock raising contributed to frontier development, and ranching became the basic feature of economic development in Texas.⁴⁴¹

Even before Escandón received his royal commission to colonize Nuevo Santander, several ranchers had pushed their ranching operations from Monterrey up to locations near the Río Grande.⁴⁴² A number of *hacienda* owners from the surrounding frontier provinces had established stock raising enterprises as early as 1734. These ranchers already owned large herds of livestock but needed more grazing land. Although these stockmen could have expanded on their own at any time, it was too risky to do so, and they would not have received subsidies or remission of taxes as they would under Escandón's plan. Furthermore, those same ranchers not only had a high regard for

⁴³⁸ Jack Jackson, "Hispanic Ranching Heritage," in Helen Simons and Cathryn A. Hoyt, eds. *Hispanic Texas: A Historical Guide* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992), 51-57, 51.

⁴³⁹ Jesús F. de la Teja, Paula Marks, and Ron Tyler, *Texas: Crossroads of North America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004), 113.

⁴⁴⁰ Alonzo, *Tejano Legacy*, 10.

⁴⁴¹ Sandra Myres, *The Ranch in Spanish Texas, 1691-1800* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1969), 8.

⁴⁴² Jackson, *Los Mesteños*, 23.

Escandón, but also recognized that the timing for expansion was right.⁴⁴³ Since the advantages offered by Escandón were superior to those granted by provincial administrators, these ranchers petitioned Escandón to relocate to Nuevo Santander and colonize the newly founded province.⁴⁴⁴

Escandón selected men as settlers who were particularly well suited to colonize Nuevo Santander due to their experience living on the frontier in neighboring provinces. According to Castillo Crimm, “unlike the absentee landlords in Mexico City, Saltillo, or Monterrey who visited only at roundup time, many of the northern *hacienda* owners lived on their own lands and supervised their ranching operations.”⁴⁴⁵ Although the climate was harsh and rainfall uneven in most locations, much of the lands consisted of grasslands that attracted well established stock raisers, such as the Garza Falcóns, the Vázquez Borregos, and others.⁴⁴⁶ In addition to recruiting and enticing the large *hacienda* owners to relocate, Escandón also offered the incentive of smaller ranches to his settlers who had hoped for the opportunity to start herds of their own.⁴⁴⁷ Due to the widespread availability of pasturelands, new ranches were founded as population pressures increased and the herds expanded, and these herds multiplied rapidly.⁴⁴⁸ Further, the central government in Mexico City backed the enterprise and it would make

⁴⁴³ Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men*, 133.

⁴⁴⁴ Eugene George, *Lost Architecture of the Río Grande Borderlands* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008), 20.

⁴⁴⁵ Ana Carolina Castillo Crimm, *De Leon: A Tejano Family History* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 10.

⁴⁴⁶ Alonzo, *Tejano Legacy*, 92-93.

⁴⁴⁷ Castillo Crimm, *De Leon*, 10.

⁴⁴⁸ Alonzo, *Tejano Legacy*, 74.

sure that governors in adjoining frontier provinces provided necessary cooperation.⁴⁴⁹

The need to secure the northern frontier outweighed the need to please these governors who had grown accustomed to exploiting their soldiers and residents for decades.

As the settlements continued to develop, ranching began to dominate the Spanish way of life, both economically and socially in Nuevo Santander.⁴⁵⁰ Eventually, the emphasis on raising large numbers of livestock near the Río Grande became the basis of the huge Texas cattle industry that developed after the civil war in the United States.⁴⁵¹

Under Escandón's encouragement, ranching gradually extended northward, and within a few years had reached the Nueces River.⁴⁵² Seven years after his initial founding of settlements in Nuevo Santander, 1,475 families were living there, equaling a total of approximately 6,350 persons.⁴⁵³ Even the territory north of the Río Grande, the most exposed to hostile Indians and the most arid, saw a steady advance in cattle operations that produced many ranches measuring in the tens of thousands of acres. These became the progenitors of the famous Texas ranches of later generations.⁴⁵⁴

By 1757, less than a decade after Escandón brought his colonists into Nuevo Santander, José Tienda de Cuervo reported more than 80,000 head of cattle, horses, and

⁴⁴⁹ Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men*, 133.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 78.

⁴⁵² Herbert E. Bolton, *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century: Studies in Spanish Colonial History and Administration* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970), 59.

⁴⁵³ *Estado General de las Fundaciones Hechas por D. José de Escandón en la Colonia del Nuevo Santander, Costa del Seno Mexicano. Documentos Originales que Contienen la Inspección de la Provincia Efectuada por el Capitán de Dragones Don José Tienda de Cuervo, el Informe del Mismo al Virrey y un Apéndice con la Relación Histórica del Nuevo Santander por Fr. Vicente de Santa María*, Introduction by Rafael López, 2 vols. (Mexico: Archivo General de la Nación, 1929), 38.

⁴⁵⁴ De la Teja et al., *Texas: Crossroads*, 81-82.

mules, and over 300,000 head of sheep and goats in the province.⁴⁵⁵ Nuevo Santander grew more rapidly and prospered more than other provinces in the northern frontier such as Spanish Texas and New Mexico. Whereas settlers in Texas and New Mexico survived as small-scale farmers, ranchers, artisans, and laborers, Nuevo Santander's population engaged in farming, large-scale ranching, hunting, mining, fishing, and trade.⁴⁵⁶

The decade of the 1780s saw the decline of the missions as the most powerful cattle raisers in New Spain and the rise of individual, privately owned ranches took their place,⁴⁵⁷ allowing the “cradle of the Western cattle business” to be born.⁴⁵⁸ Although it is true that ranching was developing in neighboring frontier provinces before the exploration and colonization of the *Seno Mexicano*, by effectively eliminating competition in stock raising from the missions and by implementing a system of administration in which the soldiers, who were traditionally exploited by governors of the provinces, were replaced by settlers who were free to engage in ranching, Escandón laid the foundation for the civilian ranching industry to emerge. The economic necessity of feeding and maintaining the local population, as well as supplying food, clothing, and equipment for miners on the Central Plateau and inhabitants of Mexico City allowed it to continue.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁵ Graham, *Built Environment*, 60.

⁴⁵⁶ Armando Alonzo, “A History of Ranching in Nuevo Santander’s Villas del Norte, 1730s to 1848” in Richmond F. Brown, ed. *Coastal Encounters: The Transformation of the Gulf South in the Eighteenth Century* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2007), 188.

⁴⁵⁷ Jackson, *Los Mesteños*, 4-5.

⁴⁵⁸ Walter Prescott Webb, *The Great Plains* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1931), 208-209.

⁴⁵⁹ Oakah L. Jones, *Los Paisanos: Spanish Settlers on the Northern Frontier of New Spain* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 20.

By 1836 and the Texas Revolution, Nuevo Santander boasted over 350 ranches with over 3,000,000 head of livestock, and Matamoros, the largest city in the province, had a population of over 15,000 inhabitants.⁴⁶⁰ The ranching legacy in Texas lives on today. Despite the Spanish having written copiously about their ranching experiences in New Spain from the beginning, most historians could not or did not read their accounts and the myth that ranching developed under Anglos emerged and continues today. In 2004, Robert Pace wrote on the ranching industry in Texas and its development; however, he omits Escandón and his achievements in the Province of Nuevo Santander in his discussion of ranching.⁴⁶¹ In addition to accomplishing the systematic settlement of the *Seno Mexicano*, a goal that had eluded other Spaniards for more than two centuries, Escandón paved the way for the civilian ranching industry to emerge and flourish, a feat for which he has yet to receive due credit.

⁴⁶⁰ Graham, *Built Environment*, 60.

⁴⁶¹ Robert Pace, *Frontier Texas: A History of a Borderland to 1800* (Abilene: State House Press, 2004), 74-75.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

This dissertation presents an analysis of the exploration of the *Seno Mexicano* and the preliminary colonization of Nuevo Santander led by José de Escandón from 1747-49. Chapter II reviews previous works on these historical events, the region, and Colonel Escandón. Relatively few scholars have focused their studies on José de Escandón, and he and his accomplishments in the *Seno Mexicano* have remained marginalized in the history of New Spain.

In Chapter III, the historical background contextualizes these events in the larger historiography of the region. Previous attempts at exploration in the region had failed due to a lack of human and financial resources dedicated to the effort, primarily due to Spain's preoccupation with other, more pressing issues in the Old World. For almost a century, Spain was unable to secure the northern frontier of New Spain and assert its control over the natives who had taken refuge there or prevent foreign encroachment into the region. Securing the northern frontier had long been on Spain's foreign policy agenda, when, in the mid-1700s, another instance of French encroachment into the *Seno Mexicano* was reported to Spanish officials. Threats of continued foreign encroachment, coupled with what Spanish official considered to be an ongoing native problem forced Spain to explore and colonize the region. After much competition for the coveted position, José de Escandón emerged as the viceroy's selection to lead the campaign into the *Seno Mexicano*. Once the area was successfully explored, Escandón proposed his

settlement plan to the viceroy, and began the preliminary colonization of Nuevo Santander.

Chapter IV is the first English-language annotated translation of Escandón's *Informe* documenting the exploration of the *Seno Mexicano*. Escandón describes three separate events in his *Informe*: the preparation for the exploration, the exploration into the *Seno Mexicano*, and his colonization plan for the newly explored region. In addition to documenting his own activities during the exploration expedition, Escandón details the activities of the six other captains whom he had charged with exploring specific areas of the *Seno Mexicano*. The colonel includes details regarding the geography, flora, and fauna of the region and documents the available water sources in the region. He also provides information on the natives who inhabited the region, commenting on their alliances and, briefly, on their customs.

Escandón also proposes plans for founding settlements and missions in the newly explored region. He notes that three strategic implementations were necessary to accomplish the proposed colonization: first, the soldiers who would serve as settlers should be offered lands and all the respective privileges that accompany the title of first settlers; second, the missionaries who would serve the proposed missions should be appointed from the College of the *Propaganda Fide*; and finally, no presidios should be founded, due to their expense and ineffectiveness. Instead, the soldiers chosen to colonize would serve to protect the recently founded settlements from native attacks.

Chapter V is an account of the preliminary colonization of the Province of Nuevo Santander led by Colonel Escandón from December 1748-May 1749. This account is

the first to provide a synopsis of the preliminary colonization of Nuevo Santander that is based on both available primary sources: Escandón's *Autos* and Friar Simón del Hierro's *Diario*. Escandón's *Autos* serve as the foundation for the synopsis, while information from Hierro's diary has been incorporated in order to add detail to the account. There are a number of discrepancies between the two manuscripts. Notes and clarifications indicated by the author on both manuscripts help provide a chronological synthesis of the two accounts of the preliminary colonization of Nuevo Santander.

In his *Autos*, Escandón documents the founding of the civilian settlements in Nuevo Santander that occurred from December 1748-May 1749. He details the geographical surroundings of each settlement site, the reasons that each site was suitable for settlement, and his strategy behind the selection of each location. Of particular importance was Escandón's decision to found the settlements in the midst of the natives inhabiting the region, as he felt this would isolate various tribes and prevent them from forming alliances against the Spaniards. The majority of the settlements were also located within a relatively close proximity to one another, so that colonists would be able to assist one another when necessary.

Friar Hierro provides additional information regarding violent interaction between the Spaniards and the natives, as well as native customs, which Escandón omits in his *Autos*. Friar Hierro also reports on some of the issues that the colonel faced during the preliminary colonization of Nuevo Santander, such as Escandón's failure to locate a port in the region, the lack of water near some of the proposed settlement sites, and discontentment among the settlers who were attempting to implement Escandón's

colonization plan. The inclusion of Friar Hierro's *Diario* is critical for a fuller understanding of the preliminary colonization of Nuevo Santander.

In Chapter VI, the impact of Escandón's implementation of a unique colonization design for the Province of Santander is foregrounded. The conceptual design for settling Nuevo Santander deviated from the traditional colonization plan implemented in settlements in New Spain. The colonel relied on colonists rather than soldiers and priests to settle Nuevo Santander. This design contributed to the emergence and growth of civilian ranching in Nuevo Santander. The colonel's exclusion of the natives of the *Seno Mexicano* from the colonization design also contributed to the plan's success, and had an impact on the growth of civilian settlements in the region.

In order to produce the annotated translation of Escandón's *Informe* in Chapter IV and the account in Chapter V, the author transcribed all the source manuscripts under investigation in this study. The locations of the source manuscripts were determined through a search of various guides to archival materials and verification of manuscript locations as cited in secondary sources. Microfilm copies of these manuscripts were available at the Benson Latin American Collection at the University of Texas, and semi-paleographic transcriptions of these manuscripts were produced in accordance with best practices adapted from the Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies. Once transcriptions were completed, their accuracy and content were verified against the respective original manuscript held in the Archivo General de la Nación in Mexico City. The annotated translation in Chapter IV and the account in Chapter V are derived from the author's transcription of source manuscripts.

Philological transcription of source manuscripts and the subsequent comparison of any copies to the original serve to uncover the truth and can assist in rectifying discrepancies found in the historical literature. Further, translation of these manuscripts aids in the recovery of the Hispanic heritage of the Southwest by making these texts available to non-Spanish speaking scholars. In addition to serving the fields of history, anthropology, and ethnography, the accessibility of the materials in transcription can also be of value to linguists interested in studying the state of the language in colonial manuscript sources. Areas for research related to these documents could include analysis of indigenous lexical items, dialectology of the scribes, and syntactic standardization.

The scope of this dissertation includes the exploration of the *Seno Mexicano* in 1747 and the preliminary colonization of Nuevo Santander that occurred from 1748-49. In an effort to provide a comprehensive analysis of the history of the Province of Nuevo Santander, a future study will include an annotated translation of Captain Antonio Ladrón de Guevara's *Noticias*, which provides detailed information on the state of the region prior to Escandón's entry in the late 1730s.⁴⁶² Expanded research will also include all phases of the colonization of Nuevo Santander, which lasted until 1757. After the completion of the preliminary colonization from 1748-49, Escandón suggested that additional settlements be established in the region in order to secure communication routes. He planned an inspection tour of the existing settlements and recommended sites

⁴⁶² Antonio Ladrón de Guevara, *Noticia de los poblados del Nuevo Reino de León, Provincia de Coaguila, Nueva Extremadura y Texas, Nuevas Philipinas: Despoblados que hay en sus Cercanías, Indios que Habitan, etc., año de 1739* (Real Biblioteca de Madrid), ms. II/2837, folios 110r-136r.

for additional towns to be founded in the future. The colonization of Nuevo Santander, which occurred from 1747-57, is documented by a series of reports written by Escandón the viceroy and the reports that religious fathers wrote to their superiors in the College of Zacatecas. A future study will transcribe, translate, and analyze these invaluable historiographic sources, as well as an inspection report submitted in 1757 by José Tienda de Cuervo regarding the state of the settlements in Nuevo Santander.

All transcriptions produced for this project are located in the Supplemental Files for this dissertation, which are available for download. These transcriptions are semi-paleographic, and were produced in accordance with best practices adapted from the Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies. Brackets indicate editorial emendations. Editorial deletions are noted in parenthesis. Scribal use of parenthesis is indicated with a caret preceding the use of the opening parenthetical mark and again before the closing parenthetical mark: ^(^). Abbreviations have been resolved using <>. Capitalization and punctuation have been modernized, but original spelling and word divisions have been maintained. A pilcrow indicates the beginning of a new paragraph when the scribe did not provide numbered entries.

Supplemental File 1 is the transcription of Escandón's *Informe* (1747): AGN, Mexico, PI, Vol 179 ff. 145r-194r. Supplemental File 2 is the transcription of Escandón's *Autos* (1748-49), AGN, Mexico, PI, vol. 179 ff. 304r-341v. Supplemental File 3 is the transcription of Friar Hierro's Diary, AGN, Mexico, Historia, vol. 29 ff. 209r-231v. Supplemental File 4 is the transcription of the four folios, 45r-46v, recovered from Captain Orobio y Bazterra's report to Escandón found in *El Borrador*

del Informe de Escandón (1747), Consejo Estatal para la Cultura y las Artes de Tamaulipas, folios 1v-46r. This transcription does not contain marginalia, as the author only transcribed the four relevant folios from said *Borrador*.

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