

October 13, 1951

### **Original and Autographed**

When the original expedition to the Tulares sent out to quell the revolting neophytes from the Missions retreated to Santa Barbara, the Governor thanked the troops for their bravery, though he could not quite comprehend the retreat; but it seems that a storm of wind and dust had prevented more effective operations. There were but 80 men in the troop under Lieut. Fabregat, who had two encounters with the rebels at Buenavista Lake and at or near San Emigdio.

Governor Arguello immediately set about the organization of a new expedition to the Tulares, the preparations for which were completed about the end of May, 1824. The command was given to Captain Portilla and one of the subordinate commanders was Lieutenant del Valle, of the forces sent from Monterey. The whole force was about 130 men.

The report of this expedition has never been published as far as we can ascertain. Evidently it had found its way back to Mexico and no knowledge of it was known in California until the original document, written in Spanish, came into the possession of Thomas W. Norris of Carmel, a few days ago. Mr. Norris has kindly consented to allow a history of the historic document and a brief translation to be used today.

The 127-year-old document is written in ink – in Spanish – on beautiful paper in a penmanship so clear and even that it should be the envy of all who read it today. It is the original and autographed diary of Lieutenant Antonio del Valle, Commandant of the Northern Division of California, addressed to the Chief Superior Military and Governor Civil of Alta California, Luis Arguello, reporting, day by day, the interesting circumstances historic, military, ethnographic, etc., of his expedition from Monterey, through inland of Alta California, to San Emigdio and the Lake of Tulare, May 1 to June 27<sup>th</sup>, 1824. The report was in connection with the expedition of Captain Pablo de la Portilla, commandant of the southern division, to pacificate the missing Indian neophytes from the Mission of Santa Barbara, Santa Inez, and La Purisima.

At the end the report is signed and dated: "Monterey, 28 de Junio de 1824. Antonio del Valle. The folio is seven pages in length.

Portilla and Valle met far out on the plains of the Tulares, at San Emigdio, Bancroft records; "The diary of the northern division is not extant, if any was written." But now it has been found, too late for recording by Hubert Howe Bancroft but not too late for present day historians to get excited about.

The fugitives were camped near where the troops met, heartily repentant, as they said, willing to return to mission life, but timid and apprehensive of punishment if they should give up their weapons, according to the "Diario de una Expedicion al Tular, Portilla, 1824." On the 16<sup>th</sup> of June the army started to return, the rebel chief Andres being left behind to collect and bring in some 40 refugees who had not been found on that date. All reached Santa Barbara on the 21<sup>st</sup>, and the revolt of 1824 was at an end.

Luis Antonio Arguello, governor of California at the time of the Indian rebellion, was captain of the San Francisco company until his death, which occurred March 27<sup>th</sup>, 1830.

It is interesting to note in Bancroft's California that the "presidial" cavalry company, with officers and mechanics, decreased from about 90 in 1821 to 75 in 1826, after which, in consequence of troubles at the Capitol (Monterey), the figures are very contradictory, varying rapidly from one month to another.

The Infantry detachment, commanded by Lieutenant Valle in 1822 at the time of his report to Governor Arguello on his expedition to the Tulares, also declined in numbers. In the Monterey district in 1830 the force was 60 cavalry with 20 invalids, 20 infantry, and 20 artillery; or a total force of 120 men, of whom 40 or more were scattered in missions, pueblos, and ranchos.