

October 8, 1951

When the Indians Revolted

A heretofore unknown document has found its way back to Monterey from Mexico and now in the collection of Thomas W. Norris, the president of the Monterey History and Art Association. It is the original report, written in the Spanish language, from Antonio de Valle to the governor, Luis Arguello at Monterey on June 28, 1824, telling of the experiences of the troop under his command in their endeavor to quiet the revolt of Indians in the Tulares.

He states that having just returned with the troops that serve the governor under his (del Valle's) command from the execution in cooperation with Capt. Don Pablo de la Portilla, against the Indians raised in rebellion against the Mission of Santa Barbara and other Christians of the Missions of Santa Inez and Purisima, which had taken refuge in the Laguna de Buenavista and its Tulares, and uniting with the Gentiles that inhabit that region – without any harm to the troop. For the governor's knowledge of that which occurred on the round trip he reports in the following diary. (To Mrs. William Kneass we owe thanks for the translation.)

May 1 – On this day the squad of the troop with the piece of ordnance left at 10 in the morning from the Capitol of Monterey following the route to the Mission Soledad, where they arrived at 6 in the afternoon without incident.

May 2 – At Soledad, overhauled (or repaired) the infantry armament and the artillery packs, and ordered a cavalry soldier to the capital to get 1,000 musket cartridges.

May 3 – On this day continued to march toward Mission San Miguel, and having camped in the spot called Los Ojitos, Lt. del Valle left the men in charge of the sergeant of infantry, Jose Antonio Gaxiola, while he went to the Mission San Antonio which was only three leagues from the camp.

May 4 – Del Valle left San Antonio and rejoined his division which had camped at the place called Pleito, and continuing the march they came to the Mission San Miguel at five in the afternoon, without incident.

May 5 – From this day until the 14th they remained at San Miguel, without incident.

The next entry in the diary was made on May 15, when del Valle wrote that the Padre Presidente, Father Sarria, arrived at the mission, having come from Monterey and was headed for Santa Barbara to join Padre Ripoli and accompany Capt. de la Portilla, commander of the southern division.

On May 16 he states that was nothing new and on the 17th reports that the Padre Presidente left Santa Barbara to join Senor de la Portilla.

Del Valle left Santa Barbara on May 18, according to the old report, leaving the troop at San Miguel in charge of "Sargento distinguido de la Compania de Caballeria of the Presidio of Monterey Don Ignacio Vallejo, to agree with Senor de la Portilla about the expedition, and returned to San Miguel.

On June 1 del Valle rejoined his troop and arranged for the march to the Tulare country.

June 2 – In San Miguel, preparing food, stores and other equipment for the campaign.

June 4 – Started the march to the destined spot, leaving Mission San Miguel at 8 in the morning and arriving at Agua Dulce at one in the afternoon, where we encamped for the night.

The following day Del Valle and the troop left this camp at 6 in the morning and traveled until 2 in the afternoon to a place called Panza (named thus by the Indians) without incident. June 6 they left the last named place at 5 in the morning and at 12 noon, having come to two small streams with murky water, they stopped for an hour and then continued on to La Ortiga, where they concluded the day's march at 6 in the evening. On June 7 they began their march at the same hour as the previous day in the direction of Rancho San Emigdio, at which point according to plan, they joined Captain Don Pablo de la Portilla at 11:30 in the morning and went on to Buenavista.

From the above diary the reader can imagine somewhat the fastness and yet the slowness of travel in 1824.