

The  
Presidio and Militia  
on the  
Northern Frontier of New Spain

A Documentary History

Volume Two, Part Two  
The Central Corridor and the Texas Corridor,  
1700–1765

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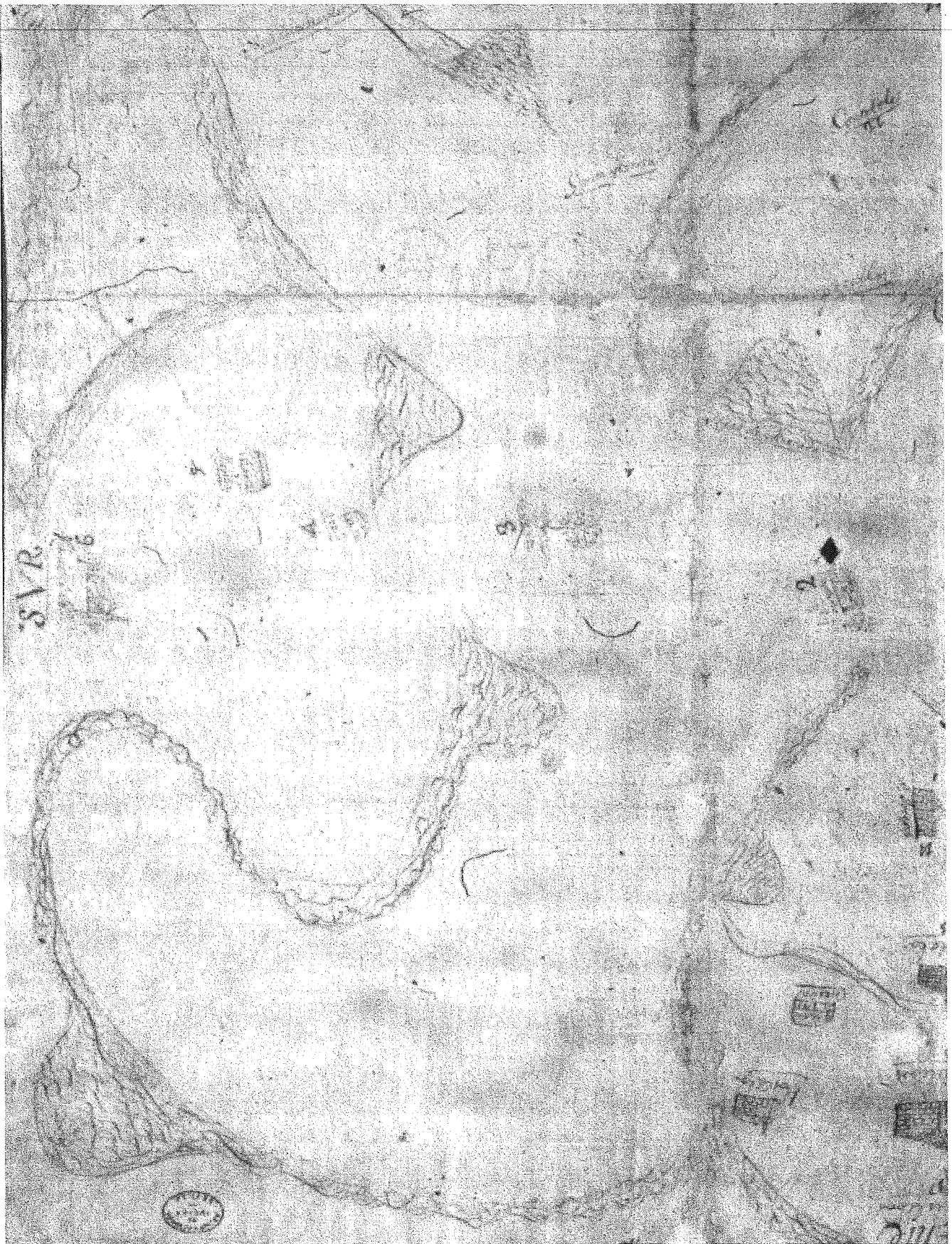
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### Captain Berroterán's Report on the Condition of Nueva Vizcaya (1748)

**C**aptain Joseph de Berroterán knew the intricacies of the northern frontier like few other Spaniards. Of Vizcayan origin, Berroterán entered the military early in life and quickly attained prominence as a local military leader and landowner. His family became so well known in northern Chihuahua that the mountain range now known as the Sierra del Carmen bore the name Berroterán until the late eighteenth century. During the early 1720s, Berroterán received his first appointment as captain at the presidio of Mapimí. Within a few years, he was transferred to the presidio of San Francisco de Conchos, where he became capitán vitalicio (captain-for-life), a position he still held when the presidio was suppressed in 1751.

As captain of the Conchos presidio, Berroterán was responsible for supervising military protection for the vast area that extended northward to the Río Grande and westward to the Tarahumara region. By 1748, the year in which the following document was written, his thirty-five years of service had given him a detailed knowledge of the lands and peoples of the region. His wide range of experience on the frontier made him both an asset and a liability to colonial administrators in Mexico City and Spain. The extensive network of contacts he had developed with both Spanish residents and local Indian groups permitted him to pursue his own interests, occasionally in opposition to those of the metropolitan officials he had been hired to serve.

In 1729, Brigadier General Pedro de Rivera, who conducted presidial inspections throughout the north between 1724 and 1728, chastised Berroterán for his failure to complete an exploration to the Río Grande, an area of rough country frequently used as a refuge by Indian raiders. Rivera did not accept Berroterán's excuses that a major drought and the condition of his soldiers' horses had prevented the successful completion of the campaign. Instead, Rivera chastized Berroterán for having abandoned the expedition after losing only twenty-five horses, while the commanders of two previous campaigns, Domingo Terán de los Ríos and the Marqués de San Miguel de Aguayo, had lost 500 and 800 horses respectively on



*Map of the province of Coahuila by Juan Ignacio de Castilla y Rioja, 1741.  
(Archivo General de Indias, M<sup>o</sup>P, México 146)*





highly successful expeditions.<sup>1</sup> Rivera believed that rather than securing new ground for the empire, Berroterán had been content to explore trade routes between Chihuahua and the haciendas and mines of Coahuila.

Colonial officials condemned Berroterán's exploration for its additional failure to make a reconnaissance north of the Río Grande to search for evidence of French penetration into the fringe areas of Spanish occupation. Metropolitan fears of an imminent French invasion of the interior provinces must have seemed laughable to Berroterán and other presidial commanders. Their previous forays into the basins and ranges east of Chihuahua and Durango had demonstrated the difficulty of carrying out large military campaigns in that arid region. The uninhabited Bolsón de Mapimí, the former territory of the Tobosos, a tribe that the commander himself had helped to round up and send in chains to Mexico City, was becoming a haven for Athapaskan-speaking Apache bands, even more tenacious and unpredictable than the Tobosos had been. Their mastery of horsemanship had allowed the Apaches to develop an economy based largely on raiding Spanish settlements. For Berroterán, establishing peaceful relations with the Apaches presented a more immediate goal than the defense of an uninhabitable frontier against a rival European crown.

Despite these conflicts with higher officials, Berroterán retained his position at the presidio of Conchos. When Berroterán received the order to write a report on the condition of the northern frontier in October 1747, he had spent most of the preceding eighteen years campaigning against hostile Indians in all parts of Nueva Vizcaya and in neighboring provinces as well. He was in a position to provide his superiors with valuable information that could not be obtained from other sources. In his report, Berroterán continually emphasized his unequalled knowledge of the frontier.

As a regional military commander and a large landowner, Berroterán was aware of the political and ecological conditions that spurred the shifting alliances between the bands of native peoples in the Bolsón de Mapimí. Unlike the conquistadors and missionaries who preceded him in exploring the desert wastelands east of the Sierra Madre, or the colonial administrators who hounded him to pacify the region, Berroterán realized that complete military or spiritual conquest of the nomadic indigenous groups who migrated southward to inhabit that desolate, inhospitable area was next to impossible. Instead, he acted to establish a negotiated peace backed by the force of arms. This required a balancing act for which Berroterán was uniquely suited. As captain-for-life of the presidio of Conchos, he served as protector of haciendas and settlements on the desert frontier to the east of the camino real that linked Chihuahua with Mexico City. At the same time, however, he was the well-known *compadre* of at least one prestigious Apache leader and acted as a middleman for trade and gift giving with several other unconquered indigenous groups that had recently migrated into the area. Through personal negotiation, Berroterán managed to increase his individual influence within a volatile native society and at the same time to reduce the dependence of indigenous groups on raiding Spanish settlements.

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1. The complete inventory appears in AGI, Guadalajara, 513, and in the Bancroft Library, M-M 1784.

Despite the successful balance they achieved, Berroterán's negotiations and personal deals were at odds with the administrative reforms implemented by the Reglamento of 1729, which had followed Rivera's inspection. The reforms had decreased royal payments to presidios and transferred military personnel into smaller, more mobile "flying companies." These quick-response teams were designed to engage Apaches wherever they struck and then pursue them into their areas of refuge. When Berroterán wrote his report, he was struggling to provide protection for the vast area for which he was responsible under the restrictions of budgetary and personnel decreases imposed by military reorganization.

A year after he submitted the report reproduced here, Berroterán was again chastised for his actions during an exploration of the Río Grande conducted in October and November 1749. He was placed under arrest and, in the course of placing an embargo on Berroterán's possessions, government officials made an inventory of his real property and movable goods. The inventory provides a remarkable insight into the material culture of the northern frontier and into the potential for monetary accumulation available to ambitious military officers.

At the time of his arrest, Berroterán owned two substantial haciendas and a smaller ranch. At the *estancia* of San Luis, eight leagues from the presidio of Conchos, Berroterán raised cattle and mules and operated a water-powered flour mill. His employees included a foreman, several vaqueros, a miller and his son, and fourteen laborers, whose accrued debts were entered into the hacienda's ledger. The ranch had five thousand head of branded cattle, four herds of mares for breeding mules, more than two hundred riding horses and pack mules, several small adobe houses, stockyards, and a large wooden rodeo corral.

The hacienda of San Antonio de la Ramada, some twenty leagues from San Luis, was Berroterán's residence. The hacienda had an extensive farm, with irrigation water taken directly from the Río Florido, which encircled his land. In addition to 146 *fanegas* of wheat and 2 *fanegas* of corn under cultivation,<sup>2</sup> the farm had 10 milk cows, 70 plow oxen, 10 herds of mules, more than 2,000 head of sheep, almost 1,000 head of goats, and a herd of cattle of unstated size. The hacienda's eighteen-room adobe house was practically new, plastered and white-washed. The inventory noted that all its windows were movable and all doors had hardware with locks and keys. Household furnishings included a painting on cloth of the Virgin of Guadalupe, oil paintings of the four *santos doctores*,<sup>3</sup> a table and bench, and three "French-style" wooden chairs. The hacienda had an area for soap processing, a fully equipped carpenter's shop, a full supply of farm implements and tools, and many storage areas. The chapel contained two statues of San Antonio, several sets of vestments, a hardwood altar with altar cloths, an hourglass, and silver vessels and candlesticks. The hacienda's sixty-five peons, whose encumbrances were logged in the account book, lived in twenty small houses and huts.

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2. In agrarian land measures, a *fanega de sembradura* is equivalent to 3.57 hectares (8.81 acres). Therefore, Berroterán had about 522 hectares (1,286 acres), cultivated in wheat and slightly more than 10 hectares (17.26 acres), planted in corn.

3. The *santos doctores* of the church were Saints Augustine, Gregory, Ambrose, and Jerome.



BOLSON

Sierra de la Pajla

Soldado de Cruz de Sierra  
ademas

Pic de Lagon



Feche en Buenos Aires el dia 10 de Agosto de 1774



Berroterán's wife, Margarita de Ugarte, promptly protested her husband's arrest and the confiscation of property that she claimed belonged to her, rather than to her husband, noting that it was common knowledge that her husband had been poor when they married. Berroterán managed to recover his property and his captaincy, and his children and grandchildren appear as officers in the military rosters of northern presidios until Mexican independence.

When he wrote his report on the condition of the province in 1748, Berroterán took the opportunity to respond to some of the criticisms that were being mounted against him at the time and that were to lead to his arrest shortly after the report was submitted. In addition to defending his personal reputation, Berroterán also used the report to present his evaluation of the administrative reforms implemented by the Reglamento of 1729. To his detailed observations of the area's diverse native settlements and populations, Berroterán added his pessimistic opinion that the reforms would diminish the ability of presidial commanders to maintain Spanish domination over indigenous groups. The final section of the report contains Berroterán's attempt to influence his bureaucratic superiors against the reforms.

In the end the protests that Berroterán raised were vindicated, for Rivera's reforms proved to be ineffective. The new flying companies were unable to contain the Apaches. Increased raiding offset any potential financial gain that might have been achieved by decreases in presidial expenditures. By the 1770s, many of Berroterán's self-serving unofficial actions aimed at gaining "peace by purchase" had been incorporated into official colonial policy. His 1748 report influenced the establishment of new presidios at Guajoquilla and La Junta de los Ríos, and Commandant General Teodoro de Croix incorporated many of Berroterán's suggestions into the offensive policy he adopted after 1776.

**M**ost excellent sir,  
Presented herewith is the report that, through your excellency's honor,<sup>4</sup> was ordered to be drawn up. It is hoped that the reliability of its evidence will counter any defect that its brevity may produce, and that it will obtain your approval through its contribution to the glory of God.

I, Don Joseph de Berroterán, captain-for-life of the presidio of San Francisco de Conchos in the kingdom of Nueva Vizcaya, place myself at your excellency's feet and, with the greatest deference and in the best manner that the law permits, state [the following]: I have been ordered by your excellency to make a report on the state of this realm, the condition of its presidios, and all the enemies on its frontiers, and to include within it all the information acquired during the time that I have carried out my office and continued to endure the hostilities of the Indian savages, along with whatever else I did to this purpose. In duly attempting to carry out your superior orders with the greatest of care and the most diligent investigation, I have tried to recall everything that has come to my attention while

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4. Addressed to Juan Francisco de Güemes y Horcasitas, Marqués de Casafuerte, who served as viceroy from 1746 to 1755.

I have been in this region and everything that has happened during my term of office, in order to compile (as I have done with the greatest accuracy and legality) [the report] that I hereby present in thirty written pages, attested to with the requisite solemnity, so that after reviewing it your excellency might render whatever decision you deem appropriate, overlooking any defect my brevity may have caused with your well-known accommodation.

Therefore, the report having been presented, I humbly request your excellency to order whatever action you may judge to be just. [To all of this] I swear in due legal form.

Joseph de Berroterán

November 24, 1751

(Testimony received in duplicate)

Most excellent sir:

Your excellency has seen fit to send me orders by a decree dated October 10, 1747, wherein you concurred with the auditor's suggestion of requesting a report from me, as well as other just and legal decisions that affect me. Although the reasons why I am considered an interested party in the matter could compel me to request of your renowned authority that I be released from making [the report], I find it advisable to obey—despite the stigma I may suffer for being in the present position of defending my dedication and conduct, which [someone] has attempted to blacken. My actions have been twisted and misinterpreted, and it has been intimated that they are improper and contrary to my proper duty.

However, several legal documents from your higher government, with the authority of your excellency's respected predecessors as viceroy, have sanctioned our operations and the various commissions that I have executed and completed, and they have conferred approval upon me and given me thanks. Based on this, I do not hesitate to proceed in complying with your excellency's order and presenting to your celebrated wisdom everything that my slight understanding has been able to notice, observe, and examine over the course of the thirty-five years that I have served his majesty (may God keep him) in his royal presidios of Mapimí and Conchos. Although my small talents have not been given the best demonstration and for this reason my lengthy narrative may cause your excellency some bother, I assure you I have no other motive than to give an account vested in complete truth—the greatest proof of which will be seen in what I relate with regard to the assignment of land parcels. I confess that from this point on, in the process of attempting to connect the dates, cite the orders, and compose my information, I will make errors in some instances. Because I have lived without the need to coordinate all the events and occurrences of my life—attention to war having been my destiny—I have been concerned not with the details, but with carrying out my duty. In addition, I will refer to past events purely for information, because they occurred long before I was relocated from the realms of Spain to this one.

The royal presidios of El Pasaje, El Gallo, and Conchos were established by the real cédula of his majesty (may God keep him), signed in Madrid on September 22, 1685. Each [was assigned] fifty soldiers due to the grave alarm in the realm that

was caused by the uprising of eighty-five nations from among the pueblos on the Nazas River and its Laguna de Parras,<sup>5</sup> and other places. The vestiges of the ruins from [these uprisings], as well as from the depopulation of the mining settlements of Santiago de Mapimí, Jimulco, and Casco,<sup>6</sup> remain today. This evidence gave rise to fears that the same situation might occur among the remaining Tepehuán and Tarahumara people, who had already been catechized and reduced through the apostolic zeal of the reverend missionary fathers of the Holy Company of Jesus and the Order of Our Father Saint Francis. [These Indians had also been settled] at the mines of San Juan Bautista de Indé, Guanaceví, Santa Bárbara, and Parral,<sup>7</sup> and were producing large profits for the community and taxes for the royal treasury. Moreover, they provided protection for our Holy Gospel and its practitioners, and the realm itself served as a defense for that of Galicia. Because of reports and statements from Don Gabriel de Niza y Quiroga,<sup>8</sup> governor of the realm, [his majesty] judged the aforementioned presidios to be insufficient and, Catholic piety overriding his [personal] interests, ordered two others built at Casas Grandes and Santa Rosa de Corodéguchi,<sup>9</sup> with the same number of officers and soldiers. Thus our reduced settlements were made secure and a front was formed against all our apostate and gentile enemies.

With the presidios established for their respective purposes, we began to curb the attacks against our settlements by pursuing the enemy with detachments of

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5. The Nazas River drains an area of present southern Coahuila and northern Durango. The Laguna de Parras was a shallow lake in the center of the Bolsón de Mapimí, fed by the floodwaters of the Nazas.

6. The mines of San Lorenzo del Casco were worked from the time of Francisco de Ibarra; the real de Mapimí was founded shortly after 1589; and Jimulco was another mining settlement located near the Río Aguanaval, between the Río Nazas and Río Santiago.

7. All these mines were located in the Tepehuán territory south of Parral near the Río Florido, in present-day Durango. The mining camp at San Juan de Indé (or Indehe) began operations in 1567. Five hundred Tepehuanes were settled there during 1602 and 1603. It later served as a Spanish fortress during the Tepehuán Revolt of 1616-18. Guanaceví is located in the heart of the Sierra Madre, south of the Río de las Nazas. The mines, which may have been settled as early as the 1570s, thrived until 1616, when many of the Spanish settlers were killed during the Tepehuán uprising. Santa Bárbara, the least successful of these mining camps, was southwest of Parral on the headwaters of the river of Valle de San Bartolomé. It began operations as a mining camp in 1567; by 1707, mining activities had subsided. In 1631 the discovery of rich silver deposits at Parral, on the headwaters of the Río San Gregorio in south-central Chihuahua, resulted in a mining boom. Because mining here required skilled labor, the settlement attracted a larger Spanish population, and the town served as the unofficial capital of Nueva Vizcaya until 1739.

8. Don Gabriel José de Neyra y Quiroga served as governor of Nueva Vizcaya from 1784 to 1788.

9. The fifty-man presidio of San Antonio de Casas Grandes was established in 1686, in western Nueva Vizcaya. A larger presidio was established nearby at Janos in 1691. The presidio of Corodéguchi, subsequently known as Fronteras, approximately 250 kilometers west of Janos in the northeastern corner of Sonora, was not physically established until 1692; prior to this it was a *compañía volante*, ordered by Governor Neyra y Quiroga as Berroterán suggests.

twenty-five soldiers or more, depending on the size of the enemy group as indicated by their tracks. Through this indescribable toil, their reduction to settlements was effectively achieved.

In the years 1690 and 1691, it became necessary for the missionary fathers to correct the Indians' idol worshiping, ascribing [their actions] to the "thorn of the sweet vine" of the Gospel message by which they hoped to subject [the Indians] to Christian teachings, civility, and policy. As soon as this happened, the populations of the Tarahumara Alta—as lovers of their savage freedom, and in spite of there being so many presidios and numerous soldiers who were continuously moving against the enemy—murdered several priests, burning the churches, and then retreated to the cliffs and canyons. In response to these unexpected events, and by order of the governor of that realm, all the presidios dispatched as many soldiers as they could, amounting to between 150 and 200 including the subalterns, under the command of Captain Juan Fernández de Retana.<sup>10</sup> The force also included at least five hundred Indian auxiliaries from the nations of Chisos, Conchos, Tapacolmes, Norteños, Cíbolos, and Tepehuanes,<sup>11</sup> whose participation lasted approximately two years at a considerable cost to the treasury, as can be imagined.

After the Tarahumaras were pacified, campaigns with 50 to 80 soldiers and 150 Indian auxiliaries were conducted every year during the months of September and October, that being the season during which it was possible to penetrate the terrain and the mountains where the enemy lived. Each one would set out in a different direction. On one occasion in the Sierra Mojada,<sup>12</sup> three troops together encountered the Cocoyomes and the Acoclames, who lived there. More than two hundred Indian auxiliaries and seventy soldiers were sent into the mountains after them, but they succeeded only in capturing one Indian woman, and they lost two Tlaxcaltecan soldiers from the company maintained by that nation at the pueblo of Santa María de Parras.<sup>13</sup> They were forced to abandon the campaign because of [the area's] sterility and lack of water, which have always impeded our forces' operations. [These conditions] leave most of the terrain open to the enemy, who, observing the movements of our troops, would enter our settle-

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10. Born in Spain, Juan Fernández de Retana was the first captain of the newly established presidio of Conchos in 1685. He continued to serve as its commander until his death in 1708. A veteran Indian fighter, he eventually achieved the rank of general.

11. The Tepehuanes described here were probably the eastern extension of this widely dispersed agricultural group who inhabited the area near the Santa Bárbara district in present-day southern Chihuahua. The Conchos Indians were concentrated along the Florido, Conchos, San Pedro, and Chuvíscar River systems. The Chisos Indians, an eastern extension of the Conchos Indians, gave their name to the Chisos Mountains of Big Bend National Park in Texas. Uto-Aztecan speakers, all these groups were hunter-gatherers who practiced some limited horticulture.

12. The Sierra Mojada is a small, ragged mountain range rising out of the Bolsón de Mapimí.

13. Santa María de Parras is approximately twenty-five leagues west of Saltillo, in present-day southern Coahuila. The Tlaxcaltecan colony was founded at Parras in 1598. Epidemics devastated the native population of Parras during the seventeenth century.



ments with great ease to steal the horse herds, secure in the knowledge that our forces were well within their territory and that because of the great distances and extensive lands they have in their mountains, our settlements were helpless. The result was that they succeeded in attacking wherever they pleased with impunity.

Every year the presidio of Conchos carried out an inspection of the reduced Tarahumara settlements with fifty soldiers. In view of this and the recent punishment [the Tarahumara] had suffered in retaliation, the captain went with Indian auxiliaries into their cliffs and canyons and extracted all the Indians he found, conducting them to his presidio. He established them as a pueblo and supplied them with everything they needed from the funds for war and peace, so that the reduced Indians might acquire whatever was necessary for their settlement and maintenance through their labor. This system was followed throughout the life of Captain Retana, and the settlements were no longer inspected—either because they were believed to be very obedient to his majesty and the missionary fathers or because large forces of the enemies on the frontier began hostilities. [These enemies] attacked the convoys on the camino real with no fear of their size or the escort of sixteen soldiers that accompanied them, and killed the soldiers and several passengers. Overpowering the convoys at the site called El Arroyo de Baus, which is midway between the presidios of San Bartolomé and Cerro Gordo,<sup>14</sup> they carried off the horses and mules, clothing, and some silver.

After this beginning (without precedent until that time), [the Indians] continued their hostilities on the road that goes from the presidio of Cerro Gordo to El Gallo,<sup>15</sup> killing [the larger part of] a squad of sixteen soldiers that was returning to [El Gallo] after leaving the convoy at Cerro Gordo. Twelve to fourteen soldiers perished at the hands of the enemy at a place near Los Patos. The same thing happened at Agua Nueva to another squad from Cerro Gordo, which was returning after having left the convoy in El Gallo. Ten soldiers from the presidio of Cerro Gordo perished.

Because of these unfortunate events, the governor of Vizcaya<sup>16</sup> arranged for the convoys entering Nueva Vizcaya to set out from the presidio of El Pasaje at the beginning of each month throughout the year; those leaving would depart from Valle de San Bartolomé. They were to be accompanied by an escort of twenty-five soldiers and an equal number of auxiliary Indian archers, to be paid from the aforementioned funds for war and peace. In this way the possessions of

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14. Valle de San Bartolomé, approximately twenty kilometers southwest of Parral, is located in present-day south-central Chihuahua. The settlement was first a Franciscan convento, becoming an *alcaldía mayor* in the 1640s. From 1715 to 1751 the garrison, which had formerly been at Parral, was stationed at San Bartolomé, commanded by the local magistrate, who was designated *capitán de guerra*. Cerro Gordo, in north-central Durango twenty leagues southeast of Parral, was established as a presidio in 1646 by Governor Luis de Valdés of Nueva Vizcaya. It remained a presidio until 1751.

15. San Pedro del Gallo, formerly an hacienda, served as a presidio from 1687 until 1751. Southwest of Mapimí and north of the Río de las Nazas, it is approximately one hundred kilometers southeast of Cerro Gordo.

16. The reference is to Juan Isidro de Pardiñas, who served as governor of Nueva Vizcaya from 1688 to 1693.

the merchants who entered and left that kingdom were protected, and the working of the mines—as well as the discovery of new ones, such as the mine at San Felipe that was discovered in the year 1707—were facilitated. There are many more besides that can be gained once the territory is advanced, mines as rich in minerals as those in the Tarahumara region, where veins of silver are found at every step. Although they are not worked today, due to the sparse population, they could be reopened in time. This has not occurred to date because of the laws, which do not foster the interests of the discoverers, who desire profits in return for their risk and fear of the enemies, and because of what unreliable subjects the reduced [Indians] are.

With this part of the enemy secured and intimidated by means of the preceding measure and the great numbers in the convoys, many of the assaults against [the convoys] were curbed. The [Indians] began to attack the haciendas and the sheep and cattle ranches, entering houses and burning many of them, and causing many deaths at the [town] of San Gerónimo. Because of this deplorable hostility Don Juan Felipe de Orozco y Molina,<sup>17</sup> as lieutenant governor and interim captain general, personally took charge of exacting revenge against these foes with a force of more than 120 soldiers and settlers, along with 150 Indian auxiliaries. [The enemy Indians] were found in the Sierra Conula, where they sought shelter for their families, forming a front against our force. Our men decided to retreat, securing their horses and the provisions that drew enemy raids, without having succeeded in anything more than recovering the plunder left in [the enemy's] *ranchería*. The auxiliaries availed themselves of this as their payment, and the stolen horses were restored to their owners.

In the year 1711, by order of the most excellent Duque de Linares,<sup>18</sup> the presidio of Mapimí<sup>19</sup> was established with twenty-five soldiers detached from the presidios of El Pasaje, El Gallo, Cerro Gordo, and Conchos, and nine others from the presidio of San Sebastián in the Valle de Santiago Papasquiario.<sup>20</sup> The mine at Mapimí was operating with seven or eight smelters in which a great deal of lead ore was extracted, along with silver of legal standard, precious metals, and many alloys needed to make other valuable metals useful. It is located some twenty-five to thirty leagues north of the [presidio] of Pasaje and about sixteen leagues northeast of the mining town of El Gallo.

In 1714 or 1715 the governor was succeeded by Don Manuel de San Juan y

17. Juan Felipe de Orozco y Molina served as governor of Nueva Vizcaya from 1712 to 1714.

18. Fernando de Alencastre Noroña y Silva, Duque de Linares y Marqués de Valdefuentes (1641?–1717) served as viceroy from 1711 to 1716.

19. This document gives a definitive date for the establishment of the presidio of Mapimí.

20. The Valle de Papasquiario is in present northwest Durango state, on the Papasquiario River. A military force was established at San Sebastián in the late 1590s. The presidio of San Sebastián, however, was later moved to Chiametla, at the modern site of Concordia, Sinaloa. After 1693, a *capitán de guerra* was stationed at Santiago Papasquiario and a presidio was located at nearby Santa Catarina de los Tepehuanes. Civilian militia replaced presidial troops after 1711.

Santa Cruz.<sup>21</sup> During his term in office, seventy-five hostile Cocoyome, Aco-clame, and Coahuileño Indians lay in wait for the convoy at the place called Santo Domingo, at the beginning of the camino real that leads to the presidio of Cerro Gordo, seven leagues from El Gallo. On this occasion the captain of El Pasaje, Don Martín de Alday—accompanying the illustrious Don Pedro Tápis,<sup>22</sup> former bishop of Durango, on his general inspection—arrived with twenty-five soldiers from his presidio and ten from El Gallo. They marched to the aforementioned site of Santo Domingo, where they stopped to spend the night. During the afternoon, while walking and entertaining his excellency with the guns, they ventured close to the place of the ambush. By divine providence, or out of respect for the dignity of his excellency, the enemy did not wish to attack him. This incident, as told by the enemy, occurred at Acatita la Grande,<sup>23</sup> where they portrayed his excellency with his coach and coachmen in the same posture they had observed, with one coachman tugging at the mules' halters and the other putting on their blinders. The captain and his soldiers likewise were clear of this imminent danger, although the illustrious minister was frightened because he had been unaware of the situation.

A few days later the captain of the presidio of Mapimí was marching to the mining town of Indé to be married and stopped to rest at this site, accompanied by a guard of sixteen soldiers and an equal number in his retinue. [The enemy], who were lying in wait, observed how few were in the traveling party and attacked, killing the captain and twelve soldiers. They carried off one prisoner, but set free the others, whose number included the chaplain. All were stripped and sent off on foot to the hacienda of San Mateo de la Zarca, midway between the presidios of El Gallo and Cerro Gordo. The entire herd of transport animals was stolen.<sup>24</sup>

Upon hearing this news the governor, using the 30,000 pesos from the funds for peace and war that were turned over to him from the royal treasury in Durango (which he was entitled to after five years of service), formed a company with eighty soldiers, twenty-five settlers from the district of Indé, and one hundred Indian auxiliaries under the command of the captain of El Gallo, Don Juan Bautista de Lizasola. They succeeded in reaching the place called Salinas de Machete (four degrees northeast of the presidio of Mapimí, a distance of about fifty

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21. Manuel de San Juan y Santa Cruz served as governor of Nueva Vizcaya from 1714 to 1720.

22. Alday later served as governor of Nueva Vizcaya from 1720 to 1723. Pedro Tápis served as twelfth bishop of Durango from 1713 until his death in 1722.

23. Acatita la Grande, (Acatita meaning "place where cane grows") was the site of a water hole and later of an hacienda. Located in the broad valley between the Sierra de Tlalhualilo and the Sierra de las Delicias, about eighty kilometers northeast of modern Torreón, it was used as a staging point for expeditions into the Bolsón de Mapimí, including those of the governor of Coahuila, Juan de Ugalde, during the 1780s. The pictographs above the water hole at Acatita la Grande were locally famous for centuries and remained visible until recent years.

24. This attack is described in "Attack on the Hacienda of La Zarca, 1715" in chapter 1.

leagues), where they captured between twenty-two and twenty-six prisoners of all ages and [both] sexes. [The governor] continued successive campaigns under the direction of other subaltern presidial captains, using the aforementioned 30,000 pesos and an equal amount that the settlers of that realm contributed toward the war, in addition to volunteering themselves. In this way the settlers bore the expense of the campaigns, as well as of the convoys and shipments of silver.

While the second force was out in enemy territory under the command of the captain of Valle de San Bartolomé, Don Juan de Salayses, the *ranchería* of savages remounted and rode to our lands; they surrounded the hacienda of Ramos<sup>25</sup>—the house of which is equivalent to a presidio, fortified with armies of *vaqueros* and herders under the command of an administrator and overseers. The *vaqueros* were inside the house and had a herd of mules closed up in the corral for the night. Using the strategy of hiding behind a stone corral that faced the gate, six of [the Indians] hid to one side of the mule corral and crawled into it. When they heard the *vaqueros* saddling their horses, [the Indians] opened the gate and began to drive the mules out, in full view so that everyone in the house would follow them. Unfortunately the administrator, the overseer, and all the men—more than twenty-five—rode off in pursuit, leaving only two men in the house with their families.

At this opportunity, the hostiles advanced toward the house, and the families took refuge in the fortified tower, to which they escaped with one of the two remaining men. [The Indians] disregarded the other, allowing him to catch a horse and ride bareback to inform [the Spaniards] that they should return to help, which they did. Riding out to meet them [the Indians] killed sixteen or eighteen people, including the administrator and overseer, and carried off all the clothing they found in the house. Because of this incident the hacienda was deserted by Don Antonio de la Campa, who was its owner.

This event was followed by a campaign of Don Joseph de Berroterán, captain of the Conchos presidio.<sup>26</sup> Using the same number of soldiers as in the earlier campaigns, he succeeded in capturing twenty-four or twenty-five [Indians] of all ages and [both] sexes. Provoked, the enemy sought the destruction of the presidio and its captain and soldiers. They came on the following moon, more than 120 in number, and fell upon the sixteen soldiers who were guarding the horse herd. Killing twelve and wounding the others, they carried off the entire herd of more than seven hundred horses. All the while the Indians were expecting the relief [party of soldiers] to follow them, which would allow them to execute the same strategy [as at Ramos] and achieve the satisfaction of devastating the presidio as planned, without injury.

Next, they came to the presidio of Cerro Gordo and used the same [strategy] with the guards of its horse herd, killing four to six soldiers and stealing the

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25. The hacienda of Ramos is located along the river of the same name upstream from its junction with the Río Nazas, within the *alcaldía* of Real de Oro in the present-day state of Durango.

26. At this point Berroterán begins his eyewitness testimony.



horses. Because of our experience at Ramos and the limited number of men at the presidio who could counter enemy attacks, no punishing action could be executed with the necessary speed. Formal campaigns were then attempted, with forces greater than those of the enemy; however, the sterility and roughness of their territory favor [the enemy] just as they rebuff the troops, who have no wish to subject themselves uselessly to a death with no honor. As they withdraw their movements are observed by [the Indians], who have thus succeeded in acquiring and taking away the horses for their own use, leaving the companies in their respective presidios. For this reason, [the campaigns] in most instances have been undertaken without the results striven for, and the same losses have been occurring to the horse herds at El Gallo and Mapimí.

In 1720 the aforementioned governor, Don Manuel de San Juan [y Santa Cruz], was succeeded by Don Martín [de] Alday, captain of the royal presidio of El Pasaje. Informed of this and having experienced his valor, the enemy feared that as governor he would drive them to their ultimate destruction. They set out on the road to the mining town of Parral, [meeting the governor] six leagues from the presidio of Cerro Gordo. They begged him for peace and for a pueblo in which to settle down. In compliance with his majesty's orders he received them and ordered them all to go to the presidio, where he would furnish them with everything necessary for their support from the funds for peace and war. They lived in this way for some six months, traveling freely throughout our settlements, haciendas, and ranches.

During September of that year, it was rumored that there was unrest in the pueblos at the confluence of the Río [Grande] del Norte and the Río Conchos, and that this had caused the missionary fathers to leave. It was decided that Captain Don Juan Bautista de Lizasola should set out with a detachment of seventy or eighty soldiers and a similar number of Indian auxiliaries to investigate and determine the cause of the unrest. According to the captain's verbal report, the unrest arose when Reverend Father Lipián, their vice-custodian, ordered the Indians of those settlements to clean out the ditches for the cultivation of their fields. They obediently complied and worked on the ditch for more than one league, which was all that the seasonal rise of the Río Conchos permitted. At the first flood the banks of the irrigation ditch were washed out, along with all the work they had done.

Moving to another location judged by the father [to be better], the Indians worked obediently doing what the father ordered them to do—just as well or even better than before—and the same thing happened again. The third time this happened, in view of their experiences and their lost labor, the leaders of those settlements and their people advised the reverend father that, if he would request that the governor of [Nueva] Vizcaya send them a skilled person to determine by the rising and falling [floodwaters] where the irrigation ditch could be placed and its banks maintained, they would gladly contribute their personal labor and toil. To that end they dispatched their chief with a petition to the governor. [The chief] ignored this task; perhaps because of his practical knowledge of farming in the Valle de San Bartolomé, where he had grown up, he believed the proposal to be impossible and did not deliver it. For this reason [the Indians], lacking the decision they had hoped for—along with the materials with which to put it into

practice, to be obtained from the funds for peace and war—resolved to depose their chief from his position because he did not attend to matters vital to their preservation and well-being, as this [incident] demonstrated. The reverend fathers inferred that [the Indians] wanted to rebel and attempted to secure themselves at the villa of San Felipe el Real.<sup>27</sup> All the priests' successors have done the same, entering [the region] only briefly, and the Indians have always received them without trouble. The captain's formal report of these events was found by that government, as well as your excellency's higher government, to be consistent with the account that the aforementioned governor would give to the captain general's office.

With the previous order carried out, [the governor] set out for the presidio of Cerro Gordo (accompanied by me). Upon our arrival there the inhabitants of the *ranchería*, located at the arroyo some 2½ leagues below the presidio, withdrew to the [arroyo's] mouth about twelve leagues away and took refuge in the mountains, afraid of being captured in that flat land. They were on their guard, lacking faith in the promise given to them that they would have a *pueblo* and would not be punished for the crimes they had committed, all of this being the effect of their bad propensities and consciences.

On the day following the governor's arrival, the chief who commanded these nations, Don Juan de Lomas,<sup>28</sup> came with others to excuse the earlier action, saying that he had been away from the *ranchería*. His people had risen up and had followed their trail to reach the previously mentioned mouth [of the arroyo]. The chief [said he] was on his way to see them and would confer with his people on establishing the conditions they desired. He immediately set out and, after meeting with them, returned to the presidio of Cerro Gordo, then continued on to Parral. [The Indians] followed him that far, observing his movements. They took more than three hundred horses from the hacienda of Antonio [illegible], in the jurisdiction of Valle de San Bartolomé, after which [the Indians] abandoned their *ranchería* and went to join the Coahuileño Indians who had come to stir them up.

In the year 1721, leaving their families safe in the Sierra de Chocamueca,<sup>29</sup> [these Indians] went together to the presidio of Coahuila in the town of Santiago de Monclova.<sup>30</sup> There they raided the horse herds and killed the guards, with the exception of one whom they permitted to escape so that he would go to the town with the news. On hearing of the attack, all the [men] there set out to the rescue.

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27. The mines at San Felipe el Real, the present-day city of Chihuahua, became a villa in 1718.

28. Juan de Lomas seems to have first come to the attention of the Spanish during a campaign carried out against the Cocoyomes in 1716.

29. The Sierra de Chocamueca (or Sierra Prieta) is one of the various ranges in rugged north-central Coahuila.

30. The villa of Santiago de Monclova was founded in 1689, though Spanish *encomenderos* had worked the area since the sixteenth century. The garrison of San Francisco de Coahuila in Monclova did not become a presidio until 1775. The commander of this garrison usually served as governor of Coahuila as well.

Opposing them on the road [the Indians] killed them all—including the lieutenant, the last killed, at the entrance of [the town]. They succeeded in plundering the houses and the store of the governor, who at that time was the Marqués de San Miguel de Aguayo,<sup>31</sup> who was away on the Texas expedition. The families [of the townsmen] retreated into the church with the parish priest, while the captain from the presidio of San Juan Bautista, Don Joseph de Caimurguia [Ecay Múzquiz],<sup>32</sup> and other settlers defended the church and the families.

In the same year, 1721, [at the end] of June or the beginning of July the Indians traveled to the pueblo of Santa María de Parras. Employing the same method at the site of Las Cruces, they killed more than twenty-four of the most prominent men of the area (who came out to reclaim the horse herd), including the alcalde mayor; this misfortune is still mourned today. They took prisoner Don Francisco Santalla and two others, who, seeing that they were threatened with death at the hands of the Indians, induced them to go on to Parral, telling them that the governor would give them all the clothing they might want as a ransom in exchange for the three captives, including Don Francisco. The Indians accepted the proposal and set out for the borders of Parral.

These misfortunes were reported to the governor, Don Martín de Alday, who was in the city of Durango performing his inspection. They also advised him that Don Pablo, leader of the Coahuileños, had sent two Indians to his brother, who was settled with his people in the pueblo of Cinco Señores,<sup>33</sup> so that he would rise up and join them. [The messengers] were to tell him what had been carried out in Coahuila and Parral and say that all of them together would put an end to all the presidios and towns. To prevent this from happening, the governor took all the necessary protective measures in the presidio of El Pasaje, and his captain and soldiers did the same at [Cinco Señores]. There the convoy of soldiers stood guard at the site that was overtaken and captured everyone, as well as those who came later. They brought the Indians to the presidio, where they were imprisoned and chained.

With this action completed, the governor proceeded against the offenders, launching a campaign with soldiers from all the presidios. Informed by the captain of Valle de San Bartolomé and the document written by Don Fernando Santalla [of the three Spaniards held for ransom], the governor set out, ordering the captain to advise the Indians posthaste that they should come down to the Río

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31. The Marqués de San Miguel de Aguayo in 1721 was José Ramón de Azlor y Virto de Vera, one of the largest landowners in Mexico. He maintained his principal residence at Patos, Coahuila. In 1719 he was appointed governor and captain general of Coahuila, and in 1720 he led an expedition to Texas to reoccupy the east Texas missions abandoned during the French invasion of the preceding year. As a result of the expedition, the number of missions in Texas was increased from two to ten and the military presence was strengthened, establishing a definitive Spanish claim to Texas. The marqués remained in Texas until May 1722, when he was replaced as governor.

32. Joseph Antonio de Ecay Múzquiz served as governor of Coahuila from 1716 to 1717. Earlier he had witnessed the founding document for the villa of Santiago de Monclova.

33. Cinco Señores, a settlement on both banks of the Río de las Nazas in northern Durango, was established in 1678. It was a dependency of the El Pasaje presidio.

Florido with their captives, and that when the governor arrived he would grant them everything they requested.

Notified that the governor had arrived at Parral, the Indians came down to the pueblo of Atotonilco<sup>34</sup> with Santalla and his companions, and [the captives] were exchanged for the requested clothing. The governor warned them that they should all come down together with their families [to settle] close to the town in a suitable site of their choosing; if they did not, he had orders from his majesty requiring him to bring in by fire and blood any Indians who abused his clemency, due to the deceptions [the Indians] had practiced upon the governor and his predecessors with similar peace treaties, when they enjoyed the benefit of the royal treasury, in that they were supported and received clothing for themselves and their families. Henceforth, if they did not keep their agreement, they would receive the punishment prescribed by [his majesty's] order.<sup>35</sup> To this the Cocoyomes and Acoclames responded that they would not have broken the agreement had the Coahuileños not stirred them up. They stated that, assuming they found all [the Coahuileños] to be together with them, they would send them in to be outfitted with clothing. In view of what [the Coahuileños] were wearing, it would not be against their interest to come down into the governor's sight where he could capture them, as he did without bloodshed. The Cocoyomes and Acoclames made this malicious proposal in order to keep the Coahuileño women, whom they desired for themselves, to replace those who had been taken in previous campaigns against them.

With the Coahuileños secured in the Parral jail, and those from Cinco Señores at the presidio of El Pasaje, the assistance [to the Cocoyomes and Acoclames] was continued with the provision that they congregate in a pueblo. Atotonilco was urged upon them; they had lived there in an earlier period during which they were supported by the funds for peace and war, which paid for their crops of corn and wheat and other needs.

They accepted [the governor's] proposal, and he placed them under the supervision of the reserve captain, Antonio Rodela,<sup>36</sup> who was to supply them with food while they were settling into the pueblo. Rodela continued in this capacity, for he understood their language, and while standing as godfather for two of them, they let him in on the secret that the tribe was making bows and arrows in order to rise up in rebellion. When he received this news and had seen it for him-

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34. Atotonilco is located on the Río Florido, in the southeast corner of the present state of Chihuahua. It was established as a settlement for migrant desert tribes sometime before 1604. Along with San Bartolomé, Atotonilco served as a labor depot for the area's Spanish ranchers and miners. Enslaved Indians from the Tepehuán, Conchos, Toboso, and other tribes were distributed to Spaniards from these commercial centers. Although a Franciscan friar was usually present at Atotonilco, the settlement had an erratic and violent history and was sacked and abandoned several times.

35. War would be made against rebellious Indians, and they would be sold into slavery if captured alive.

36. Antonio Rodela served for many years in the presidios along the camino real to Chihuahua and was instrumental in the eventual reduction of the Acoclames and Cocoyomes to pueblos. In 1704 he was an *alférez*, and by 1728 he had achieved the rank of captain.

self, he reported it to the governor who, as a soldier of great experience, issued secret orders to assemble the troops stationed in the immediate area, whose settlers are renowned for their valor and use of weapons. With troops numbering more than four hundred, in addition to the Indian auxiliaries from nearby pueblos, [the governor] surrounded the flat terrain where the enemies were situated. He ordered Antonio Rodela to go to their ranchería to reproach them and induce them with gentle means to surrender. They did not give up, however, and took their weapons in hand. Forty savages escaped the skirmish along with many women, but the rest were captured and taken to the prison in Parral.

Having imprisoned them in that jail, the governor then singled out an Indian who was thought to be more faithful and more sincere than the other prisoners. Speaking with this man at times, and with an elderly Indian woman at others, the governor [urged] the Indians to bring those who had escaped down to congregate in the pueblo, for the liberty of the prisoners depended upon it.

The [governmental authorities] thought to secure all of them with this incentive. When they had no success after some months, however, it was ordered that Don Joseph de Alday and I, who were both captains at the time, one at El Pasaje and the other at Mapimí, should set out on a campaign with fifty soldiers. During [this campaign] we captured fifty-seven *piezas* ["pieces"]<sup>37</sup> of all ages and both sexes at the spring of Carmen, which is sixteen leagues northeast of the presidio of Cerro Gordo and almost the same distance from the camino real, forming a triangle with the presidio of El Gallo.<sup>38</sup>

The prisoners were conducted to the royal presidio of Cerro Gordo and secured in chains. Informed of this, the governor gave us orders that [Captain] Alday was to go to the mining town of San José del Parral, to remove the chained prisoners from the jail there and conduct them to this court, due to the many expenses that the rest of them caused the royal treasury. I, Captain Joseph de Berroterán, was to go to [the presidio] of Mapimí, which was under my command, to wait for the Indians and their families whom Antonio Balduz, a prisoner I had freed, had offered to bring in with his missing family and as many others as he could. He did so, bringing in eighteen Indians with their women and children. After I informed the governor that they had all been secured in the royal presidio of San Pedro del Gallo, he ordered me to set out in search of Rivillas, who was missing along with twelve others.

For this endeavor I took along two of the prisoners as guides, and with their aid I captured Rivillas and seven others in the Sierra de las Hornillas,<sup>39</sup> which is ten leagues north of the camino real and a little farther from the presidio of El Gallo. Six escaped by staying away from our patrol. The records of the judicial investigation, which were sent to the office of the captain general along with the Indian captives, will verify their considerable numbers and the expenses to the treasury.

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37. *Piezas* was a common euphemism for human captives.

38. This description places the spring within the Sierra del Diablo, a desolate region of dunes and dry mountain ranges west of the Bolsón de Mapimí.

39. This may refer to the variously named small mountains that lie immediately north of the present-day village of Ceballos, on the highway between Torreón and Ciudad Jiménez.

In the year 1723, Don Joseph Sebastián López de Carbajal<sup>40</sup> became governor, and even though the realm was considered free of hostiles with the extent of the previous [measures], it was decided in a junta de guerra to send out two detachments of troops during the month of September, each with forty soldiers and twenty Indian auxiliaries. One troop was to ride out along the frontier from the presidio of Conchos under the command of Lieutenant Don Antonio Molina,<sup>41</sup> and the other from the presidio of Mapimí under my command, each [troop] following its route to its end at Acatita la Grande. The two troops together were then to scout the Sierra de Chocamueca and the rest of the territory between Coahuila and Vizcaya. The inspection could not be carried out, however, because the lieutenant was held up at Acatita with the capture of the Indian called Bautista, along with the horse herd from the hacienda of Torreón and the rest of the prisoners. These had fled into the inhospitable place of Maltrata after being turned over in the town to the captain of the company there by order of his excellency. The same thing happened to me at Aguachila,<sup>42</sup> also known as "the armpit of Don Bartolo," which is ten to twelve leagues, more or less, north of the Laguna de Parras. There I encountered seven Indian nomads with fourteen women and children, making a total of twenty-eight piezas. I took them to the mining town of San José del Parral, and, in compliance with the governor's orders, I turned them over at the jail to the alcalde mayor, who sent them to this capital.

In the year 1724, while Governor Carbajal was conducting his general inspection at the hacienda of Ramos—which had already been resettled after the prisoners were taken away—some killings occurred on the road that goes from that hacienda to the Valle de Santiago Papasquiario.<sup>43</sup> According to a captive who had been in the enemies' power but escaped while they were fighting with the people killed, the Indians in question had their ranchería at Acatita la Grande. The governor arranged to wage the campaign personally, with the settlers and soldiers, but when he arrived at the presidio of Mapimí he had an accident there, and he ordered me to set out in pursuit of the enemies with twenty-five soldiers. I arrived at [Acatita la Grande], but did not find them there; I turned back and came across their trail heading toward our territory. I overtook them at Pozo Hediondo,<sup>44</sup>

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40. Joseph Sebastián López de Carbajal served as governor of Nueva Vizcaya from 1723 to 1727.

41. Antonio de Molina first served as lieutenant in 1725. He continued to serve in that capacity for at least forty years. In 1767 he petitioned for a promotion based on his years of military service on the northern frontier.

42. Berroterán visited a site called Aguachila on his 1729 exploration to the Río Grande. He mentions stopping there on January 15, at which point he would have been south of Agua Grande, at a basin now called Valle el Sobaco.

43. Santiago Papasquiario was founded as a Jesuit mission in 1597. It is located approximately five leagues south of Atotonilco on the Río Papasquiario, a tributary of the Río Ramos, in the present state of Durango. The mission was on the Topia Road, the preferred route between Durango and the Pacific coast.

44. Pozo Hediondo, Stinking Well or Stinking Water, was a common name for springs containing sulfur or other minerals that gave the water a strong unpleasant odor.



which is about thirty leagues north of the presidio of Mapimí, and a little farther from the camino real and its presidios, with the exception of Conchos. I took all the horses that they had on the plain, but I did not see [the Indians] because they were hidden in the mountains. Using the trick of keeping fires burning in their ranchería until eight at night, and then retreating to the mountains, they avoided a dawn attack by the soldiers.

In the year 1726, during the month of March, the news arrived that the [illegible] Indians had advanced as far as the presidio of El Paso with the Apaches and Cholomes who come from the Río Puerco<sup>45</sup> where it joins with the Río [Grande] del Norte from its confluence with [the Conchos?]. They [the first group of Indians] came from Coyame—better known by this name than by that of [illegible]—which is eight to ten leagues away from the junction of the Río [Grande] del Norte and is numbered among [the pueblos of La Junta de los Ríos]. Two Franciscan missionary fathers and two of their servants were at this mission. [The Indian allies] killed [the servants] and seized the reverend fathers, planning to kill them as well. They would have done so had not the principal leaders of La Junta [de los Ríos] come to the rescue of the fathers. These, seeing that their forces were too weak to counter the superior [force] of the enemies, stated that [the fathers] should be taken alive to La Junta, for they and their people also wanted to take part in the killings and scalp dances.

Using this strategy, the *norteños* managed to take the priests to their pueblo, San Francisco.<sup>46</sup> Assembling their people together, they started a war against their former allies, killing some and capturing others. When they informed the town of San Felipe el Real of this, the settlers set out in considerable numbers under the command of their corregidor and alférez, Don Joseph Aguirre. Twenty-five soldiers from the presidio of Conchos arrived at La Junta with their lieutenant (and a few settlers following them) and, with many *norteños* helping, they removed the fathers to the pueblo of Coyame,<sup>47</sup> where the entire rescue party from the aforementioned town was. They turned over the fathers, along with the Indian prisoners, and the *norteños* returned to their pueblos to defend themselves from the enemies. Even today the hostility continues and there is war between these [Indian] nations.

For these reasons, his excellency the Marqués de Casafuerte was advised by Brigadier General Don Pedro de Rivera and the residents of the town of San Felipe el Real that it would be advantageous to have a presidio of fifty soldiers at La Junta [de los Ríos]. Furthering his distinguished conduct in the service of both majesties, he decided that [soldiers] were to be detached from the presidios from

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45. The Río Puerco flows northward and empties into the Río Grande southeast of the confluence of the Río Grande and the Río Conchos.

46. The village of San Francisco was established in conjunction with the missions at La Junta de los Ríos.

47. Coyame is located twenty kilometers west of the point where the Río Conchos skirts the Sierra Cuchilla Parado in present-day Chihuahua. In 1782, the presidio of El Príncipe was relocated from Los Pílares, on the Río Grande above La Junta de los Ríos, to the pueblo of Coyame.

El Pasaje to Conchos and were to assemble at San Felipe el Real, where they would meet the captain of Janos, Don Antonio Becerra,<sup>48</sup> and fifteen of his men. Together they were to proceed—along with Brigadier Don Pedro de Rivera, who was returning from the interior presidios—to scout out a suitable location and proper situation for the construction of [the proposed presidio].

All the detachments remained together at this town for four months until the brigadier returned. As soon as everything was learned, they immediately came to an agreement that the aforementioned number of soldiers was insufficient and the more than one hundred settlers promised for the founding were [inconceivable]. After further deliberation, the reconnaissance and founding [of the presidio] were suspended because another fifty soldiers—or at least thirty more—would be needed.

In July and September of the year 1728, by order of Governor Ignacio Francisco de Barrutia,<sup>49</sup> I undertook two campaigns in which I captured seventeen piezas and recovered three Spanish captives and their horses. At the same time, the most excellent Marqués de Casafuerte planned the formation of two detachments, one with sixty soldiers, that would march through Mapimí to the villa of Monclova and presidio of Coahuila.<sup>50</sup> Fifteen soldiers were to be selected from this detachment, along with fifteen others from the presidio of San Juan Bautista del Río Grande and forty Indian auxiliaries from the pueblos of Santiago de la Candela, Caldera,<sup>51</sup> and Peyote.<sup>52</sup> Together all these troops were to reconnoiter the banks of the Río del Norte as far as its junction with the Río Conchos. This action was executed from January until May 1729, without success because of the reasons

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48. In 1686, under the command of Juan Fernández de la Fuente, Antonio Becerra took part in founding the presidio of Janos. He became captain of this presidio in 1706 and subsequently directed many expeditions against raiding Indian groups from this post. He served as captain of Janos until his death in 1734.

49. Ignacio Francisco de Barrutia served as governor of Nueva Vizcaya from 1728 to 1733.

50. The presidio of Coahuila was located at the present site of the city of Monclova, Coahuila. The villa of Santiago de la Monclova, founded in 1689, was the capital of the government of Coahuila. The garrison established in 1675 at San Francisco de Coahuila later became the presidio of Monclova.

51. San Bernardino de la Candela, twenty-five leagues east of Monclova, was one of the four Franciscan establishments founded by the provincia of Santiago de Jalisco sometime after 1674. The adjoining settlement, Santiago de Valladares, was a doctrina, or secular Indian mission. Tlaxcaltecan settlers were brought to both mission sites. Berroterán confused the names for two reasons. First was the close proximity of the two missions. Second, La Caldera was the original name of San Bernardino de la Candela. The Indian pueblo of La Caldera was founded by the governor of Coahuila, Antonio Valcárcel Rivadeneira y Sotomayor, in 1675. Its population was entirely Indian, and its first missionary was Fray Esteban Martínez. Governor Alonso de León was forced to put down an uprising against the Indian governor of La Caldera in March 1688. At the time of the uprising, some of the Indians were moved to the site called Santiago one league distant, where Fray Esteban Martínez later established the mission of San Felipe y Santiago de Valladares.

52. The mission of Dulce Nombre de Jesús de los Peyotes, in the vicinity of modern-day Villa Unión, Coahuila, was founded by Franciscan friars in 1698. It is ten leagues west of San Juan Bautista in the valley of San Bartolomé.

recorded in the journal that was sent to the office of the captain general and to which I refer.<sup>53</sup>

A month after the first detachment left Mapimí another was to set out with forty soldiers and a corresponding number of Indian auxiliaries, commanded by the captain of the presidio of El Gallo. They were to take control of the approaches used by the Indian fugitives from the area mentioned. Both [actions] were carried out, but with no results other than to travel through and reconnoiter the places referred to, and to temporarily intimidate the Indians who lived there.

In the month of July of that same year, the governor ordered me to make an inspection of the presidios in the Tarahumara [territory], where the Indians, agitated to the point of rebellion, were not obeying their missionary fathers. I was thus occupied with fifty soldiers until the month of October, removing the Indians from the canyons where they lived in idolatry and arresting the leaders who were stirring up [the people]. Taking more than 120 families from these and from the aforementioned pueblos, I kept them at my presidio for several months, supported by the funds for peace and war that the governor provided. I [then] settled them at the pueblo of Cinco Señores, supplying them with all the necessary implements. A report was made to his excellency, on whose orders this was done.

The reverend missionary fathers, having been in the immediate area, could recount from their own experience the excellent results that this campaign produced and the negative consequences that would have resulted had it not been continued.

Should not the governors who have ruled the realm of Vizcaya—from whom Ordinance 173 originates<sup>54</sup>—respond to this charge, rather than the captain of Conchos, to whom they have attributed all the misfortunes of that realm as though [the ordinance] was his doing? In this case, [however], the aforesaid governors and their presidial captains will probably be exonerated, as the inclination is to absolve them of the misdeeds and hostilities that the enemies carry out on their respective frontiers.<sup>55</sup>

In the year 1730, as I recall, the new reglamento<sup>56</sup> brought the change whereby forty-four soldiers' positions were eliminated in this realm, as were

53. This is the failed expedition for which Berroterán was severely chastised by Brigadier General Pedro de Rivera.

54. Ordinance 173 of the Reglamento of 1729 states that the governor of Nueva Vizcaya will send the captain of the presidio of Conchos on an annual expedition through the area of Santa Cruz de Tarahumara, continuing on to the pueblos of Nonoava, Norogachi, Cuiteco, Cerocahui, Lorichiqui, Guadalupe, Santa Ana, Loreto, Témoris, Yepachi, Tutuaca, Cocomórachic, Mátachic, Yepómera, Santo Tomás, Papigochic, Pachera, Temechic, Carichic, San Borja, Las Cuevas, and Babonoyaba.

55. At this point in the document, Berroterán is attempting to shift any blame for Indian disturbances away from the presidial captains and onto the bureaucrats in charge of governing Nueva Vizcaya.

56. Loosely based on the earlier Reglamentos de Habana of 1719, the new military regulations of 1729 were meant to remove outlying presidios from the control of self-interested presidial captains and to place them more securely under the bureaucratic control of the colonial state.

4,000 of the 6,000 pesos on hand for the fund for peace and war. It brought other necessary actions as well, including the inspection of Tarahumara country, and the war against the frontier enemies in the basin or pocket of land that lies between the two realms of Coahuila and Vizcaya and the Río [Grande] del Norte. The heathen enemies, unconverted and apostate, come from settlements tucked away there, and their movements will always continue like the waves of the sea—when one ends, another follows.

For with the suppression of all the [Indian groups] prescribed by Ordinance 187<sup>57</sup> of the reglamento (except for six that remained), more than four hundred Apaches have overrun the area, penetrating close to our frontier settlements. They apparently have not begun to rob and murder yet, due to the peace that their chief, Pascual,<sup>58</sup> has made with me and the friendly relationship that we have entered into, in accordance with Ordinance 193.<sup>59</sup> However, we must be on our guard against them because of their number, audacity, inconstancy, and secrecy. They keep to themselves until they are able to enter and leave the area and secure themselves in the mountains.

Governor Don Ignacio Francisco de Barrutia was followed by Don Juan Francisco de Vértiz y Ontañón.<sup>60</sup> It was during the latter's term of office that the first invasion was made by the Sizimbres in alliance with the Coahuileños and the Cocoyomes,<sup>61</sup> who had fled from San Juan de los Llanos. They killed some eigh-

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57. Ordinance 187 of the Reglamento of 1729 states that the captains of the presidios from El Pasaje to Conchos should attempt to suppress the Cocoyome, Acoclame, Tripa Blanca, Terocodame, Zizimbres, Chiso, and Gavilan nations, sending captives to the vicinity of Mexico City.

58. Chief Pascual and his band of Apaches apparently penetrated the area of Nueva Vizcaya at this time, and eventually reached as far south as the Tarahumara region and southwestern Chihuahua. Until this time, Chief Pascual's group, living in the Bolsón de Mapimí on the periphery of Spanish settlement, had committed only minor depredations. They gradually began to displace the former native inhabitants of the area and increased their raids against Spanish settlements.

59. Ordinance 193 of the reglamento states that any hostile Indian who comes into a presidio asking for peace should be treated with friendship, in the hope that he will influence other members of his nation.

60. Juan José Vértiz y Ontañón served as governor of Nueva Vizcaya from 1733 to 1738.

61. The Sizimbres (also Zizimbres or Sizimbles), were a subdivision of the Chisos nation who inhabited the territory northwest of the Tobosos, along the Conchos and Río Grande Rivers. This group probably spoke a Uto-Aztecan language and may have been related to the Conchos Indian nation. They were extinct by the 1740s. Coahuiltecan groups inhabited an area between northeastern Coahuila and present-day San Antonio, Texas. During the seventeenth century, approximately thirty-nine Indian groups spoke a similar language, identified as Coahuiltecan by missionaries Damián Mazanet and Bartolomé García. Often associated with the Coahuileños and the Zizimbres, the Cocoyomes were apparently one of the migratory Indian groups who inhabited the Bolsón de Mapimí and western Coahuila during the seventeenth century. They may have lived in the Batopilas district before the rebellion of 1616–19. Some members of their band were settled at Atotonilco in 1646. Numerous reports of their depredations can be found in colonial documents. In 1693, Captain Juan de Retana settled Cocoyome Indians at La Junta de los Ríos.

teen people in the Cañon del Casco<sup>62</sup> and stole the pack train, destroying the equipment and supplies. Some people who had dug in among the equipment to defend themselves perished in the fire's fury. Thereafter, [the Indians] frequently stole horses from the jurisdictions of Indé, Parral, and Valle de San Bartolomé,<sup>63</sup> and later continued on to Parras and Saltillo,<sup>64</sup> as will be shown in the following chapter.

As a result of the repeated requests made to the captain general's office by the Spanish settlers of Santa María de Parras, as well as by the governor, the magistrate, and the regiment of Tlaxcaltecs, I was commanded by the most excellent archbishop-viceroy, Don Juan Antonio de Vizarrón y Equiarreta<sup>65</sup>—in a letter dated July 8, 1736, with an order included—to set out on a campaign with sixty soldiers and seventy-five Indian auxiliaries from the realm of Vizcaya. Our force was joined by a detachment from the vicinity of Parras, and with the two together I carried out the campaign, paying the Indians and supplying all their provisions and equipment at the expense of his majesty (may God keep him). The events of the campaign are recorded in the *autos* and the daily log I sent to the captain general's office.

In a letter of December 2, I was ordered by the most excellent gentleman referred to [the archbishop-viceroy] to continue that campaign. While doing so I received another [letter], dated February 2, 1738. [It stated that] a gentleman of great rank and laudable circumstances would carry out the aforesaid campaign, having offered in this court to do so at his own expense, with no cost to the royal treasury. All the necessary authority was to be conferred upon Captain Juan García, a resident of Nuevo León, and the appropriate dispatch had been sent. With this news, keeping in mind the savings to the royal treasury and in order to incur no more [expenses] than those of my withdrawal, I sent a report to his excellency, along with the *autos*, the daily log of our actions, and the expenses incurred.

The campaign of Captain Juan García went so quietly that nothing is known in the realm of Nueva Vizcaya regarding its expected progress. [Information] may be available in the office of your excellency's higher government, contained in the daily log and the report that Juan García would provide, as required.

In the same year of 1738, I received a dispatch from the lieutenant to the governor and captain general, Don Manuel de Uranga.<sup>66</sup> It was sent by Don Juan

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62. Casco [Caxco] is located west of San Pedro del Gallo, just off Mexican Highway 45, about ten kilometers north of the point where this road climbs over a low mountain range heading toward the Río Nazas. Casco was first settled by the Spaniards as a mining district in the sixteenth century. Continually attacked during the seventeenth century, the mines were eventually abandoned. During the eighteenth century, an hacienda was reestablished at Casco.

63. This would be in an area east of Parral, including the headwaters of the Río Florido and continuing south to the Río de las Nazas, in present northeastern Durango.

64. These raids took place in south-central to southeastern Coahuila.

65. Juan Antonio de Vizarrón y Equiarreta served as viceroy from 1734 to 1740, and as archbishop of Mexico from 1731 to 1747.

66. Manuel de Uranga served as governor of Nueva Vizcaya for part of 1738.

Bautista Belaunzarán<sup>67</sup> (with sufficient authority) on August 29. I was to set out on a campaign during the month of September, which I proceeded to do, advancing as far as Coahuila. While I was passing through that realm, Governor Don Clemente de la Garza,<sup>68</sup> overtook me at the Río de las Sabinas,<sup>69</sup> and together we followed the trail for eighteen leagues to the area near the presidio of Sacramento. There I captured thirty-two Indian piezas of both sexes, including some of those who had fled from custody at the presidio of Conchos.

In 1740, the last missing Indians were reduced to the pueblo of Conchos. In that same [year] fifty presidial soldiers, a number of settlers who enlisted at the villa of San Felipe el Real, one hundred Indians from La Junta del Río [Grande] del Norte, and fifty more from the pueblo of San Francisco de Conchos, among them twelve of the rebels who went with the rest of the allied Indians—a total of three hundred—participated in subduing the general uprising of Fuerteños, Mayos, Yaquis, Pimas Bajos, and other nations in the provinces of Sinaloa, Ostimurí, and part of Sonora.<sup>70</sup> The Indian auxiliary troops from Vizcaya also served during this expedition, until the rebellious Indians were reduced to their pueblos. The governors of Vizcaya and Sinaloa would know the amount of money that this uprising cost his majesty, because of what they contributed.

In the year of 1741, after the twelve Indians mentioned had returned from the expedition with their families, they left the pueblo of Conchos for the vicinities of Saltillo, Parras, and Coahuila, where they supported themselves by committing murders and robberies at the borders. In their last [attacks] near the presidio of Sacramento, also known as Santa Rosa, they captured Juana Guerra, a resident from the realm of León who had come to act as *madrina* in a betrothal that was being celebrated at that presidio.

I had given orders to Pascual, one of the Apache chiefs (who was living in the pocket of land that was free of hostile Indians), to investigate whether the twelve Indian fugitives from the pueblo of Conchos were nearing the immediate vicinity of the presidio under my command, so that he might attempt to catch them. While Pascual and his [men] were carrying out this assignment, he came upon the aggressors in the Sierra Mojada, and in the skirmish that ensued between them

67. Juan Bautista Balaunzarán served as governor of Nueva Vizcaya from 1738 to 1742.

68. Sergeant Major Clemente de la Garza Falcón, son of former Coahuila governor Blás de la Garza Falcón, served as governor of Coahuila from 1735 to 1739. Claiming descent from the first settlers of Nuevo León, Garza Falcón obtained a large land grant in the Sabinas Valley at the time the presidio of Sacramento was established.

69. The Sabinas River, a tributary of the Río Salado (which is in turn a tributary of the Río Grande), flows southeastward across the northern portion of the state of Coahuila.

70. Centered in the area of southern Sonora and northern Sinaloa, the Yaqui and Mayo revolt of 1740 began among the Mayos as a revolt against Governor Manuel Huidobro. Within a few months the Yaqui leader, Juan Calixto, with an Indian army of six thousand, had taken possession of most of the towns on the Mayo and Yaqui Rivers. When Governor Huidobro offered no resistance, the revolt moved northward into the Pima Bajo territory, where Lieutenant Agustín de Vildósola broke the Indian resistance in several decisive battles. The revolt took the lives of more than one thousand Spaniards and five thousand Indians.



one of Chief Pascual's men was killed. On January 20, 1743, aggrieved by this incident, the Apaches requested my assistance in taking revenge. Giving them 104 pesos, 7½ reales in goods, horses, and provisions at the expense of the funds from peace and war, as provided in Ordinance 193, I sent them off. At the same time, I arranged for a detachment to ride out on February 10 under the command of my lieutenant, Don Juan Joseph de Basterrachea, to combine forces with [Pascual and his men] on February 12 at the site of Venado, about twenty-five leagues east of the presidio of Conchos. This action resulted in the capture of nineteen Indian piezas, and their female prisoner was restored to her husband, father, and brothers, who came for her. The dispatch from the captain general's office, dated October 14 of the same year, ordered that the [prisoners] in question be sent to this court along with the *autos* and daily log, which I have remitted.

Everything related up to this point sufficiently demonstrates the past and present need in Nueva Vizcaya for its respective presidios with their captains and soldiers. They have not wasted their time in idleness, as is assumed and ascribed to them. The brief intervals of respite that the savage, pagan Indians permit this realm to enjoy—as at the present time—may have that appearance, but these should be regarded prudently as periods of convalescence from a bad illness and preparation for another more serious one threatened by the Apaches, who have penetrated [the presidios'] frontiers, and the many others who can follow them northward. With these [presidios] eliminated (should they give cause for it), the Apache Indians would have completely free access to the more than 180 leagues that stretch from the presidio of San José del Paso to that of San Juan Bautista del Río Grande. This has happened with others who have inhabited that refuge, which accommodates not merely several but thousands of enemies. All the mountains and rough country are impassable to our [forces] but accessible to the enemy. Once they penetrate and move into that long, narrow strip, they will occupy almost all of the eastern side of Nueva Vizcaya and the western side of Coahuila, and will easily destroy both these important jurisdictions.

Given these facts, we must examine the advantages or disadvantages to his majesty (may God keep him) that have resulted from the savings to his royal treasury from the time of the reduction in military positions at the presidios up to the present. Taking into account only those events that have had the greatest effect, we are disillusioned with the majority, if not all, of them.

By means of the new reglamento of April 20, 1729, 4,000 pesos were kept back from the 6,000 that his majesty had designated for the funds for peace and war in that realm. Eighteen years have passed between then and now, and it is clear that 72,000 pesos have been saved for his majesty in that time. However, between the years 1737 and 1743, more than 120,000 pesos were spent in pacifying the pueblos in Sinaloa. The governor of that jurisdiction and [the governor] of Vizcaya, Don Juan Bautista de Belaunzarán, who expended [the funds], will provide an extensive accounting, which I add to in a similar fashion, according to what my personal experiences in the campaigns have taught me. In addition to the amount mentioned, I disbursed some 20,000 pesos worth of goods that came from the quincennium of Don Juan Bautista de Belaunzarán.

Likewise, in that same year forty-four military positions were suppressed, saving his majesty 240,000 pesos between then and now. Since that year, his majesty has spent 206,652 pesos on the two presidios that were founded in the province of

Sonora. As of last year more has been spent in six years than was saved during the eighteen years since the reglamento. This does not include another 206,650 pesos for the new presidio of Sacramento, which was built by royal order ten years ago in the jurisdiction of La Junta del Río del Norte, in Coahuila.

At that time there could have been some short-term difference, but in the long run expenses will always proceed in excess of the intended savings. The same conclusion can be reached with regard to the future handling of this matter, for it is my understanding that the governor of Sinaloa and the reverend missionary fathers of the Holy Society of Jesus in that realm are still demanding another new presidio of one hundred men (which will cost at least 41,330 pesos per year) at El Paso de Todos los Santos on the Gila River.<sup>71</sup> At the same time the Franciscan missionary fathers of New Mexico are attempting to move the presidio of El Paso [del Norte] closer to them, and to establish another new one for the reduction of the Moquis [Hopi] in the province near Zuñi. Furthermore, the reverend apostolic missionary fathers of Texas are clamoring for another presidio of fifty men on the San Xavier River<sup>72</sup> in that jurisdiction, to which may be added another sixty-eight soldiers that are considered necessary for pacifying the coast of the Gulf of Mexico.

To revere a saint as yet unbeatified while abandoning one already canonized or to plant an extensive vineyard and, through want of cultivation, never to savor the ripened fruit—this is the consequence of all these decisions. His majesty (may God protect him) might consider paying greater attention to conserving what has been acquired, then passing on to other matters after its fruition.

At the present time the only savings lie in the reduction of the soldiers' wages from what they previously received to what they receive today. However, there would not be a very large amount in this account upon liquidation, because the presidio of San Juan Bautista del Río Grande was being paid from it, but today [is paid from] his majesty's [account].

With regard to this [account], any officer who is zealous in the service of his majesty will observe that it is reduced by about half the funds it could have, [as is the case with] the performance of these soldiers. Each soldier was required to have ten horses; however, these were reduced by order to six. It is not feasible to perform the same kind of service with six [horses] as with ten, just as six men cannot work with the same strength and effort as ten, for which reason it will become apparent that this [decision] has resulted in the soldiers' profit and toil, rather than the service of his majesty. This is what the reform produces.

71. Following the discovery of a huge silver slab near the Altar River in 1737, a variety of Spanish officials and opportunists began to clamor for an expanded military presence on the northern frontier in Sonora. In 1748, following the explorations of Eusebio Kino and Ignacio Keller, Jesuit missionary Jacobo Sedelmeyer visited the Gila River and argued strongly that a mission be established at the Pima rancherías of Tuquissan, Tussonimo, and Sudac-sson near the ruins of Casa Grande. This may be the site to which Berroterán refers.

72. The San Francisco Xavier River, named by Fray Isidro Félix de Espinosa and Domingo Ramón during their expedition to Texas in 1716, is now known as the San Gabriel River. The San Gabriel, northeast of San Antonio, rises in three forks in Williamson County, Texas, flowing northeast for eighty-two kilometers to join the Little River.

At the time of the reform the presidios mentioned were considered indispensable, their personnel and locations being the most suitable for the subjugation of the reduced pueblos, the defense of the Spanish haciendas, and the escort of passengers and travelers who enter this realm with their property. This is shown by the ordinances for them.

Ordinance 139 orders that whenever any bishop passes through the provinces of Vizcaya, Sinaloa, Sonora, and New Mexico in order to visit his bishopric, each presidio shall provide an escort corresponding to the dignity and safety of his person to the places where he must make his inspection. The ordinance does not determine the number that is sufficient for the escort, leaving it to the commander to decide what he considers necessary. If I were faced with this situation at the present time, I would warily assign myself and twenty-five soldiers to escort the bishop, following the proverb, "in peace and war, protect your territory." Because of the experience acquired in the incident involving Don Pedro Tápis, to which I have referred above in paragraph 11, Ordinance 140 states that any royal official who passes through the presidios of Vizcaya is to be given an escort of eight soldiers, and that the same holds for religious prelates if they request it. Ordinance 141<sup>73</sup> has been totally abandoned in policy and practice. The following Ordinances 142 and 143 order that regular travelers and convoys are to enter Vizcaya at the beginning of each month throughout the year, and that each presidio is to contribute fifteen soldiers to escort them as far as the Río Florido. The passengers and drivers themselves anticipate that this order will come up for revision with the first deplorable mishap they experience, as has occurred in past years when the situation with arrivals and departures in the kingdom of Vizcaya was the same as it is today.

With regard to these assignments provided for by the ordinances, I leave it to your excellency's astute management of military affairs [to determine] how the presidio of El Gallo, with a garrison of thirty-five soldiers, can obey [the ordinances] without fail when any of [the escort assignments] can coincide at various times. It is neither feasible nor corresponding to the dignity of the most excellent bishop that the day determined for his departure be postponed, due to the grave consequences that might result from the delay, and the aforesaid presidio must obey and send the escort for a distance of fifty leagues as far as the city of Durango. Nor can royal officials be detained and forced to wait their turn, any more than the religious prelates, passengers, and drivers can be; the latter, in order to avoid delays, precipitously throw themselves into danger, trusting to God and good fortune and experiencing the opposite, as evidenced by the disasters mentioned. The same can be inferred about the other presidios: Cerro Gordo, Campaña, and Conchos. In addition to what has been discussed, these [presidios] have the precise and indispensable number of men and horses for their situations, and

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73. Ordinance 141 states that every month the presidio of El Pasaje is required to send a corporal with a detail of ten soldiers to patrol between Durango, Saucedá, San Juan del Río, and Santiago Papasquiá. El Pasaje is also required to provide an escort for the recruits who leave Durango for Sombrerete, and to provide an escort for the royal officials who visit El Pasaje annually.

they fall short in how much they can offer in royal service due to the paucity and poverty of their troops. This was not the case when these presidios were first established, before the reform.

There are [the following settlements] in the provinces of Topia, Tepehuana, and Tarahumara,<sup>74</sup> as shown on the map of Padre Estairreyes<sup>75</sup> of the Holy Company of Jesus, made in the year 1705:

Missions and visitas of the Order of Our Father Saint Francis	28
Jesuit [missions]	71
Mining settlements	16
Parishes	10
Haciendas of cattle and sheep	53
Presidios that serve them	5
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[Subtotal]	183

In the provinces of Sinaloa and Sonora, there are:

Missions with visitas	110
Mining settlements	36
Parishes	15
Haciendas	75
Presidio	1
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[Total]	220

Newly established settlements under the protection of the Tepehuana and Tarahumara presidios, which were founded in the provinces after Padre Estairreyes' map was made [are as follows]:

Missions and visitas of the Franciscans	13
Jesuit missions	4
Working haciendas of cattle, sheep, and horses	186
Mining settlements, including the rich one of San Felipe el Real	14
Parishes	6
Presidios	3
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[Total]	225 [226]

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74. These provinces formed part of western Nueva Vizcaya. The province of Topia, on the Pacific slope of the Sierra Madre in both Nueva Vizcaya and Sinaloa, is in present Sinaloa and the westernmost part of Durango. The area was originally inhabited by Tarachitan-speaking Acaxeas. The province of Tepehuana, in the southwestern and south-central parts of the present state of Durango, was inhabited by Piman-speaking farmers, the Tepehuanes. The Tarahumara inhabited the area immediately north of the Tepehuanes, in the present state of Chihuahua and in western Durango.

75. Padre Estairreyes (Johann Steineffer) was born in 1664 in Monrovia. Serving as a missionary in the Tarahumara region, he was known as an author and physician. He died in Sonora in 1716.

The realm of Vizcaya formerly encompassed the provinces of Tepehuana, Topia, Tarahumara, Sinaloa and Sonora, and Pimas, which were subject to its government. Today, only Tepehuana, Tarahumara, and part of Topia are included, [the other] part of Topia having been removed from its jurisdiction, along with all of Sinaloa and Sonora—including the mining center of Rosario,<sup>76</sup> with its territory—and what was acquired in the Pimería. Vizcaya exercises jurisdiction over all [of the first three], except for the villa of Saltillo, today. The realm of New Mexico [is governed by] the bishop of Durango, which city is the capital of the presidios and lies in the Tepehuana [province].

This province [of Tepehuana] lies between  $24\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  and  $27\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  latitude, and from  $257^{\circ}$  to  $263\frac{1}{3}^{\circ}$  longitude.

The [province] of the Tarahumara is between  $27^{\circ}$  and  $31\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$  latitude, and from  $255^{\circ}$  to  $250^{\circ}$  longitude.

The [province] of Topia is located between  $22\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  and  $25\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$  latitude, and between  $256\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  and  $262^{\circ}$  longitude.

The [province] of Sinaloa is found between  $28\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$  and  $32\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  latitude, and  $251\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  and  $254\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$  longitude.

The [province] of Sonora lies between  $28\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$  and  $32\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  latitude, and  $251\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$  and  $254\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$  longitude.<sup>77</sup>

The Pimería is not noted here because its boundaries are unknown, for so far no one has scouted and delineated them.

With regard to the fourth matter of how to reduce to their pueblos the runaway Tarahumara Indians who, without doctrine or civility or submission to the reverend missionary fathers, are living like pagans in idolatry and vice among the buttes, mountains, gorges, and various rivers, as is discussed in the letters of folios 30, 31, 34, 36, and particularly 38—the response is to form a detachment of fifty or sixty soldiers from the presidios of Vizcaya and others in Sonora, along with all the Indian auxiliaries considered necessary, as is recommended in the aforementioned letters. The inaccessibility of the gorges, rivers, and buttes (especially that of Guaguruco)<sup>78</sup> to which they have removed themselves could be overcome by besieging and battering the mountains with four to six small cannons of mobile artillery, to be sent at his majesty's expense. Once all [these areas] are conquered, they should be populated with Spaniards to prevent the return of the Indians (whose removal will be pointless should the [areas] remain unsettled). The inhabitants of [these areas] should be captured and their cultivated fields destroyed, then they should be removed to a foreign region and placed in a pueblo

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76. Rosario, an important mining center southeast of the port of Mazatlán in present Sinaloa, was the seat of government for the west-coast provinces during part of the seventeenth century.

77. Although Berroterán lists them individually, Sonora and Sinaloa were in fact one province that was formed in response to a real cédula dated March 14, 1732; hence, their latitudes and longitudes were almost the same.

78. Guaguruco (Guegoroco or Guegorloco) seems to have been an inaccessible outcrop somewhere along the Mayo River upstream from Macoyahui, Sonora.

there, as was done in the year 1729<sup>79</sup> by Governor Don Ignacio de Barrutia, who spent 1,000 pesos from the funds for peace and war that his majesty (may God keep him) kept for this purpose. With the abolition of these same four measures the favorable effects that sprang from the continuation of his annual inspections in the pueblos were suspended. The unfortunate consequences expressed in the cited letters stem from this.

As to the charge made against the captains, subalterns, and soldiers of the royal presidios of Conchos, Valle de San Bartolomé, Cerro Gordo, and El Gallo—since the year 1743, there has been total peace in the vicinity of those presidios, with no harm from enemy Indians either observed or reported. For this reason no campaign has been planned, for it would have been fruitless when no enemy could be found to attack. The response is that the 129 soldiers under the command of these presidial captains are strictly confined to attending to the reglamento's assignments as discussed above. Moreover, caring for the horse herd alone requires at least six men and a corporal, and a comparable number to relieve them, in addition to fifteen for the convoys. This amounts to twenty-nine men, from which number the subaltern officers must be separated, nor does it take into account the others that are needed to escort the bishops and royal officials. The situation has given rise to constant complaints from people who enter and leave [this territory] that they are not being given the escort called for by the reglamento. These people are like those who watch the bulls from behind the barriers, observing the charges in the arena. The result of all of this is that it is not possible to form a detachment of soldiers to inspect the gorges, cliffs, and rivers. Indian auxiliaries are needed for this action, as the cited letter of folio 38 advises. The task is made even more impossible by the guard of four soldiers that the governor of Vizcaya has ordered to be provided from each presidio during most of the time he has lived in the villa of San Felipe el Real. It is the governor who, as the responsible party and as Ordinance 173 provides, should attend to any matters of this nature by ordering the captains to proceed with rectifying them, and he should facilitate these measures accordingly from the 2,000 pesos available for peace and war. It has not come to my attention that this has ever been done. Because of the obedience they owe the governor, the captains' zeal can be devoted to nothing more than the very worthy goal of subjugating the Tarahumara Indians, reducing them to their pueblos and inducing them to lead Christian lives. For these reasons the governor should be held responsible instead of the captains who, as his subordinates, are generally subject to his orders.

At the beginning of this year the Indians penetrated along the banks of the Río de Nazas as far as the haciendas of El Alamo, Sierra de Albino, San Juan del Río, Rama Zarca, and Cadena,<sup>80</sup> and committed between sixteen and eighteen mur-

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79. The removal of Tarahumaras carried out during Barrutia's administration was described in the text of this document.

80. The hostiles evidently established a territory that extended from the hacienda of Cadena, which is north of San Pedro del Gallo and approximately twenty-five kilometers west of Mapimí, as far as the hacienda of El Alamo, which was approximately 120 kilometers southeast of Mapimí.



ders in this new territory. The captain of El Gallo, Don Francisco Joseph de Lizaola, reported this news to the interior presidios to ensure their security and vigilance, prompting all [the presidial captains] together to advise the governor of Vizcaya, as related in the report dated November 10, 1746, of how advantageous and important to the service of both majesties it would be to establish one or two camps of soldiers and Indian auxiliaries for the purpose of examining and ascertaining the nature of the enemies who committed these murders—whether they were the seven who remained of the defeated enemies or some of those who are scattered from the pueblos or the more than four hundred Apaches who are ensconced in the hill country that lies between the presidios of Coahuila, Vizcaya, Saltillo, and Parras. [The governor] responded to this with the aforementioned report and another that he added to it, given to this office of the captain general. The statement [of this office] remains pending today.

The auditor's lengthy opinion describes the stretch of terrain in question, giving the latitudes and longitudes. I feel obliged to inform your excellency that, judging solely from its ruggedness, dryness, shortage of watering holes, and great distances, [the region] cannot be inhabited or settled within Christian reason. Whoever might decide [to move there] would necessarily be separating themselves from spiritual guidance, for it is not feasible to provide them with this benefit. With respect to the settling of its watering holes, these are separated from one another by distances of twenty-two, twenty-five, and even thirty leagues, and they are so small that each one could barely support one settler with a small herd of 150 head of cattle and horses.

Because most [of the watering holes] are well within the mountains, scattered about in different directions, I have opened four roads leading from Vizcaya to Coahuila for commercial traffic between the two realms. The first was opened in the year 1729; from the presidio of Mapimí, it follows an easterly and northeasterly route by way of the Laguna de Parras to the Aguachila watering hole, also known as Sobaco de Don Bartolo. From there it winds, shifting directions, toward the watering hole of San Juan, then to Cuatro Ciénegas, on to the pueblo of Nadadores, and finally to the presidio of Coahuila.<sup>81</sup>

In the same year [I traveled] from the presidio of San Juan Bautista, along the course of the Río [Grande] del Norte but some distance from it, by way of the watering hole of Santo Domingo and the San Rodrigo, San Antonio, and San Diego de las Vacas Rivers.<sup>82</sup> Having gone as far as the last [river] without finding a ford across it, I turned back along the south bank and traveled for two days to return to [the Río del Norte]. After crossing to the north bank, I walked for [another] four or five days, slowed by the lack of water for either horses or men. I saw that it was

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81. This route goes east from Mapimí for approximately eighty kilometers, crossing the Laguna de Parras in a northeasterly direction to the Nadadores Valley. Settlements along the route were at the springs at Cuatro Ciénegas and the mission site at Santa Rosa de los Nadadores, both of which are located a short distance west of the presidio of Coahuila and the villa of Santiago de Monclova.

82. This journey is described in Berroterán's 1729 report. The San Rodrigo, San Antonio, and San Diego de las Vacas Rivers are small tributaries of the Río Grande that flow northward through Coahuila.

necessary to travel along the south bank because the mountains on the north side impeded our passage to reconnoiter the junction of the [Río del Norte] with the Conchos. We stopped and made camp in the best location the steep hills would permit, and I sent out seven Indian scouts to search the hills and mountains for water holes and a route by which we could continue our march. After seven days, two of them returned with the news that they had found neither a watering hole nor a route, and that they had not had anything to drink for two days. They had seen water, but at such a great depth that it took them four days to find a way to get down to it. Descending from the mountains, they found a watering hole and a small space where they could camp. They decided they would stay there to die rather than return the way they had come, but the aforementioned two Indians, in good spirits and confident of their strength and valor, headed south to the canyon and opening formed by the mountains. They found a trail—a road used by the enemy Indians—and followed it eastward through a broad, open section of the mountains that run from Cuatro Ciénegas and Nadadores to the north bank of the Río [Grande del Norte]; the end of the mountains lay beyond view, however. Following this route, they arrived at our camp and gave me the information that I have mentioned. I wanted to send them on horseback, taking other [horses] with them, to rescue their companions, but they did not dare expose themselves again to the dangers they had already suffered. Consequently, I sent them back to the detachment from Coahuila and the Río Grande, and went with [the detachment] from Vizcaya to rescue the [remaining] scouts. Breaking camp at ten in the morning, we marched the rest of that day and night at a rapid pace, a little less than half speed, and continued the following day until eight at night, when I found my Indians.

At this site, using the same diligence, I familiarized myself with the area up-river and to the north. Unable to locate a passage, I retreated southward until I found the aforementioned trail, which I followed to familiar ground—the mountains of Las Animas where I had engaged the enemy the year before. The only water at that site was a tiny water hole, hardly adequate for the men. To sustain us on our journey, I searched out two seasonal ponds that had been filled during a hailstorm. These provisioned us for a distance of more than one hundred leagues and enabled us to arrive at a place of safety, the mountains having impeded our ability to follow the Río del Norte. For these reasons it was not possible to carry out the most excellent Marqués de Casafuerte's project. This constituted the second route established from the presidio in the realm of Coahuila to the presidio of Conchos.

I opened another route from that [presidio] in 1738, during the campaign I carried out under orders from Lieutenant Governor Don Manuel de Uranga. Marching from Conchos to the Terrazas watering place, then on to Venado and the Santa Gertrudis grasslands, I continued to Acatita la Grande (the site with the most water, which at most might contain a *naranja*).<sup>83</sup> I stayed there five or six

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83. Used primarily in agricultural contexts, a *naranja* is a measure of water flow based on a rectangular opening of about 4.85 square millimeters (7.52 square inches). The altitude of the water's source, the distance the water had to run, and the time it took to fill a receptacle of a known size were all taken into account when measuring water flow.

days while the horses recuperated, and then by way of the ponds embarked upon the crossing to the spring of San Félix, at the edge of the Sierra de las Cuatro Ciénegas. Following an easterly route, I traveled from that place to Aura Pass, and from there to San Carlos Pond, which is on the camino real that goes from the presidio of Coahuila to the [presidio] of Santa Rosa.<sup>84</sup> This is the third [road]. From the Santa Rosa presidio I marched through the pass over the mountains to the Sabinas River and followed it upstream to its source. There another [route] will be found that goes to Acatita, and from there to the presidio of Conchos and the other presidios in Vizcaya by means of [the roads] opened in the campaigns I have carried out.

Coming out of the mountains and descending to the Río del Norte in a south-to-north direction—a distance of more than 120 leagues over flat land—there is no water anywhere. To find any, one must detour from that route for almost the same distance I have stated, and I could not find enough to support a camp or a company of fifty soldiers, except at Acatita where small ponds can be found once the rains have stopped. That is the time when it is possible to reach that refuge.

Everything I have related, subject to your scrutiny, can attest to the difficulties involved—which I omit so as not to be accused of exaggeration. I can only promise to put in writing for your excellency everything I have said as long as you deem it useful to your examination.

The only parts of [this territory] that might be habitable are the open spaces from the Sierra San Marcos and the Cuatro Ciénegas [range] (which ends at the Río del Norte) eastward to the [ranges] of Los Nadadores and Santa Rosa.<sup>85</sup> The peaks and valleys of these [ranges] are given various names by the Coahuileños. From this [sierra] to the west there are no [names].

The presidial locations that I have presented to your excellency are those most suitable for the safety of travelers who enter and leave the realm because they are situated on the camino real, which deviates only for the mining camp and the hills of San Felipe el Real, along the margins of the Río Florido and Río Conchos, eight to ten leagues east of the Valle de San Bartolomé. Only this [presidio of San Bartolomé] and that of Conchos can be moved, the former to the site of Guajuquilla, which is the last settlement on the frontier of Vizcaya, or to the region of the Sierra Blanca at the aforementioned river.<sup>86</sup> The presidio of Conchos

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84. It does not seem unlikely that this route headed east from San Francisco de Conchos across a desolate area north of the Sierra del Diablo. From here the route would have crossed the Bolsón de Mapimí to Acatita la Grande. The ponds that Berroterán refers to may have been the marshy swamps in the Valle de Sobaco. From here the Sierra de Madera, or Sierra de Cuatro Ciénegas, is to the north. Despite Berroterán's easterly direction, Aura Pass seems to head into the valleys north of the Sierra de Madera, for he crosses these mountains again to arrive at Santa Rosa.

85. The northernmost section of Coahuila between Cuatro Ciénegas and the Río Grande is still sparsely settled today.

86. The garrison of the presidio of Guajuquilla was moved to its site along the Río Florido in 1753. It remained at this site until 1774, when it was moved north to La Junta de los Ríos. The Sierra Blanca may refer to the series of low ranges north of modern Ciudad Jiménez, east of the Río Florido.

can be moved to the area east of La Junta de los Ríos, whose reaches are settled. This action alone would provide greater security for the settlements and relief for those who enter and leave [this realm] with the convenience of each day's journey being proportionate to the shortest distance that can be traveled without fatigue or the need to halt for water. I believe that in order to attain this benefit, we should begin construction on the barracks and chapels for these presidios; otherwise, the monies advanced on those already established at the royal treasury's expense will be lost. By forming a convoy thus, we can continue the custom of [providing] escorts from presidio to presidio as far as the aforementioned town [of San Felipe el Real].

From the junction of the Río Conchos and the Río del Norte to the presidio of San Juan Bautista, there is no place along the reaches of either river where a presidio can be built, because pasturage is scarce and the mountains and hills provide no open spaces. Even if the aforementioned Río [del Norte] had all the most desirable conditions and presidios were constructed every twelve leagues along it, all this would not be enough to prevent the multitude of Indians in the north from penetrating into the pocket, just as the presidios of Vizcaya have been unable to prevent the incursions into their own settlements when [the Indians] commit the robberies, killings, and carnage to which I have alluded. If these cannot be curtailed at that close range, what is to be achieved by forsaking [the presidios] at this distance and leaving the pocket open, thereby allowing the hostile Indians to gain control of the mountain range as far as the lands of the Apaches? In the event that the presidios were to be placed there, they would not be able to fend off the enemies who attack front and rear. Furthermore, at such a distance the presidios would not be able to defend the borders of Coahuila, the realm of León, Saltillo, Parras and the settlements there, or the [presidios of] Vizcaya that are threatened.

To clarify what I have reported to your excellency, I have taken the trouble of mapping and delineating the entire area comprising the realms of Coahuila and Vizcaya and the area of the Río del Norte. I have turned the map over to the auditor, so as not to increase the size of this report and trouble your excellency's attention any further.

In everything I have stated here and have learned from experience during the thirty-five years that I have served his majesty—at the presidios of Mapimí and Conchos, in expeditions from Parras, and in other military campaigns that have taken place against the aforementioned Indians or hostile nations at sites and locations in Nueva Vizcaya and in the districts of the adjoining governments referred to—I have attempted to comply with your excellency's orders, reporting with the truth required of me and the greatest clarity that my limited abilities allow. For this reason I have been verbose throughout this report, wanting to make clear everything that may be necessary and to communicate all possible information upon which your excellency might base whatever astute decision must be made, as is appropriate to the greater service of God and the king, and for the common good of that province and all who travel those long roads for the purposes of trade and communication in this vast realm. While the authorization for everything depends upon your excellency's understanding, it seems to me that two points need [your consideration] the most: the transfer of the presidios of Conchos and Valle de San Bartolomé to the locations mentioned, and the sup-

pression of the [presidios] in Nueva Vizcaya, whose maintenance is considered unnecessary by more than a few. Their zeal is perhaps motivated by the savings they imagine and desire for the Real Hacienda. However, I cannot refrain from stressing to your excellency that any decision about either or both questions must be preceded by careful deliberation. The Indians dare to come in and commit robberies, even with the presidios in their present locations. If these are moved to other locations, their present sites will be left undefended. In this case [the Indians], certain that there are neither garrisons nor anyone to man them, will lay waste to the small settlements that have been nurtured by their protection. The king will lose all the [financial] assistance he has rendered and the settlers will lose their scanty possessions, along with the labor invested in establishing and maintaining their settlements. [Reduced in number, the settlers will establish themselves wherever it may be more advantageous for them to go, as it is not easy to construct settlements and maintain a life amidst the danger of enemy attacks.] This does not take into account the additional unavoidable expenditures that the royal treasury will have to make to assemble materials for constructing the presidios, put the presidios in condition for troops, and protect the soldiers from the inclemency of the land and the climate.

To abolish all the presidios may well be advantageous because of the savings in military positions, but upon their closure the native tribes will arrive to dominate the areas. This will be the same as cutting off trade and communication, and the opportunity will exist for frequent robberies and murders, which harmful consequences are avoided through the vigilance of the garrisons. In that case it will be necessary to bring in [soldiers] from other presidios to drive away the enemies, because peaceful dominions will become battle sites, and reestablishing trade and communication will cost more than presently can be imagined or discussed.

These points alone, your excellency, completely summarize the great diversity and difference there is between theory and practice. It is not possible for me to describe the general consternation that fills the souls of all those who presently visit [illegible words], and in that case fear that their commerce and communications may be cut off. Not even the least of such unfavorable actions reaches this capital, where the residents receive the yoke of protection for which they work, live, and die. The difference between these [situations] being the same as that between peace and war, it is well that your excellency, with the great talents and the good judgment God has seen fit to bestow upon you, will be able to provide in whatever judicious decision you render the precautions, remedies, and all the appropriate antidotes for the ills that my limited reach [keeps from] the short range of my small aptitude. Your excellency's astute decisions will stay my apprehension, for it will prove true—with the greatest possible truthfulness—that your excellency's government will achieve universal peace with the smallest possible expenditures by the royal treasury, and all hostile nations will be subdued, along with all the other beneficial effects that are rendered in the service of God, the king, and the common good, as your excellency's inimitable zeal so inclines with well-known vigilance.

Mexico, April 17, 1748.

Joseph de Berroterán