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The official account of the Portola  
expedition of 1769-1770.



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PUBLICATIONS OF THE  
ACADEMY OF PACIFIC COAST HISTORY  
LATIN AMERICAN COLLECTION

VOL. I

No. 2

JUN 15 1978

University of Texas at Austin

THE OFFICIAL ACCOUNT OF THE  
PORTOLA EXPEDITION  
OF 1769-1770

EDITED BY

FREDERICK J. TEGGART

*Curator of the Academy of Pacific Coast History*

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

AUGUST, 1909

*Price 10 cents*

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(Founded 1907.)

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ESTRACTO DE NOTICIAS  
*del Puerto de Monterrey, de la Mis-  
sion, y Presidio que se han estableci-  
do en él con la denominacion de San  
Carlos, y del suceso de las dos Expe-  
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fin se despacharon en el año proxi-  
mo anterior de 1769.*

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cieron por la Corona de España en  
los dos siglos antecedentes para el  
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de

FIRST PAGE OF THE OFFICIAL ACCOUNT OF THE PORTOLA EXPEDITION.

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Size of the original 7% x 11% in.

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AUGUST, 1909

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## INTRODUCTION.

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The brief publication here reprinted, with an English translation, contains the first announcement of the results of the Portolá expedition to California in 1769 and 1770. The pamphlet was issued by the government of New Spain and was entitled:

Estracto de noticias/ del Puerto de Monterrey, de la Mis-  
sion, y Presidio que se han estableci-/do en èl con la denomina-  
cion de San/ Carlos, y del suceso de las dos Expe-/diciones de  
Mar, y Tierra que à este/ fin se despacharon en el año proxi-/mo  
anterior de 1769./

(At end): Mexico 16. de Agosto de 1770./ Con licencia y  
orden, del Exmô. Señor Virrey./ En la Imprenta del Superior  
Gobierno.// Folio, 3 leaves.

A second edition containing a number of typographical cor-  
rections, which are given in foot-notes to the text of this reprint,  
was also issued with the same date:

Estracto de noticias/ del Puerto de Monterrey, de la/ Mis-  
sion, y Presidio que se han/ establecido en èl con la denomi-  
nacion de San Carlos, y del su-/ceso de las dos Expediciones  
de/ Mar, y Tierra que à este fin se/ despacharon en el año prox-  
imo/ anterior de 1769.// Small quarto, 4 leaves.

A copy of each of these editions is in the possession of the  
University of California.

The *Estracto de noticias* was reprinted in Father Francisco  
Palou's *Relacion histórica de la vida . . . del Venerable Padre  
Fray Junípero Serra*. Mexico, 1787. pp. 108-112; and having  
been included in the same author's manuscript *Noticias de la  
Nueva California*, appears in the two modern editions of that  
work: Mexico 1857 (*Documentos para la historia de México*,  
series 4, vols. 6 and 7), and San Francisco, 1874, 4 vols. (Cal-  
ifornia Historical Society's publication). In no case, however,

has the original text been accurately followed. A previous translation into English was published in *The Land of Sunshine*, Los Angeles, vol. 15 (July, 1901): pp. 47-49.

The complete account of the expedition, promised in the concluding paragraph of the *Estracto de noticias*, was written by Miguel Constansó and appeared under the title: *Diario histórico de los viages de mar, y tierra hechos al norte de la California*, the text being dated October 24, 1770. A translation of this rare book was published twenty years later as: *Historical journal of the expeditions by sea and land to the north of California*; translated by William Revely. London, A. Dalrymple, 1790. Recently a new translation has appeared in *The Land of Sunshine*, vol. 14 (June, 1901): 485-496; vol. 15 (July, 1901): 38-47.

Notable as these publications are, they form but a small part of the literature that had its origin in the Portolá expedition, for there are extant the diaries of no less than eight of the participants, and even these accounts may be supplemented by the large correspondence of the officials interested in the result of the undertaking.

The expedition reached San Diego from Lower California in four divisions. Two of these came by the ships *San Antonio* and *San Carlos*; the latter was commanded by Captain Vicente Vila, whose *Diario de navegacion* covers the period from January 9 to May 12, 1769.

Of the land-parties the first, under Captain Fernando Xavier Rivera y Moncada, arrived at San Diego on May 14, 1769. Records of this journey were kept by José Cañizares, for the commander, and by Father Juan Crespí. Crespí's *Diario*, covering the entire journey to Monterey and back to San Diego, was incorporated by Father Palou in his *Noticias de la Nueva California*, and, consequently, has been printed twice, Mexico, 1857, and San Francisco, 1874.

The second party, under the commander-in-chief, Gaspar de Portolá, reached San Diego July 1st, and of its march both Portolá and Father Junípero Serra have left journals. Serra's *Diario*, from March 28th to June 30th, has but recently been made public through a translation into English in *Out West*, Los Angeles, vol. 16 (1902): pp. 293-296, 399-406, 513-518, 635-

642; vol. 17 (1902): pp. 69-76. The Spanish text, however, still remains to be printed.

The forces of the expedition having been united at San Diego were again divided. The *San Antonio* under Captain Juan Perez returned to San Blas, Vila and Cañizares with Father Junípero Serra remained at San Diego, while the main body, under Portolá, set out for Monterey on July 14, 1769. Of this journey the following accounts have been preserved:

Gaspar de Portolá, *Diario del viage . . . á los puertos de San Diego y Monterrey.*

Miguel Costansó, *Diario del viage de tierra hecho al norte de la California.*

Pedro Fages, *Voyage en Californie; traduit de l'espagnol.* In *Nouvelles annales des voyages*, Paris, vol. 101 (1844): pp. 145-182, 311-347.

José Francisco Ortega, *Fragmento de 1769.*

Father Juan Crespí, *Viage de la espedition de tierra de San Diego á Monterey*, In Palou's *Noticias de la Nueva California*. San Francisco, 1874. vol. 2, pp. 100-208.

In pursuance of its policy to publish all the documents relating to the Spanish history of California, the Academy of Pacific Coast History will issue each of these items in the present series accompanied by an English translation.

ESTRACTO DE NOTICIAS DEL PUERTO DE MONTERREY, DE LA MISSION, Y PRESIDIO QUE SE HAN ESTABLECIDO EN EL CON LA DENOMINACION DE SAN CARLOS, Y DEL SUCESSO DE LAS DOS EXPEDICIONES DE MAR, Y TIERRA QUE A ESTE FIN SE DESPACHARON EN EL AÑO PROXIMO ANTERIOR DE 1769.

Despues de las repetidas, y costosas Expediciones que se hicieron por la Corona de España en los dos siglos antecedentes para el reconocimiento de la Costa Occidental de Californias, por la mar del Sur, y la ocupacion del importante Puerto de Monterrey, se ha logrado ahora felizmente esta empresa con las dos Expediciones<sup>1</sup> de mar, y tierra que à consecuencia de Real Orden, y por disposicion de este Superior Gobierno, se despacharon desde el Cabo de San Lucas, y el Presidio de Loreto en los meses de Enero, Febrero, y Marzo del año proximo anterior.

En Junio de èl se juntaron ambas Expediciones en el Puerto de San Diego, situado à los 32. grados, y medio de latitud, y tomada la resolucion [2] de que el Paquebot San Antonio, regresase al Puerto de San Blas, para reforzar su tripulacion, y llevar nuevas proviciones, quedò anclado en el mismo Puerto de San Diego el Paquebot Capitana nombrado S.<sup>2</sup> Carlos por falta de los Marineros que murieron de escorbuto; y establecidas allí la Mission, y Escolta, siguiò la Expedicion de tierra su viage por lo interior del Pays, hasta el grado 37. y 45 minutos de latitud en demanda de Monterrey; pero no haviendole hallado con las señas de los viages, y derroteros antiguos, y recelando escasez<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Second edition: Expediciones.

<sup>2</sup> San.

<sup>3</sup> escasez.

SUMMARY OF NEWS OF THE PORT OF MONTEREY,  
OF THE MISSION AND PRESIDIO WHICH HAVE BEEN  
ESTABLISHED THERE UNDER THE NAME OF SAN  
CARLOS, AND OF THE RESULT OF THE TWO EXPEDI-  
TIONS BY SEA AND LAND WHICH WERE SENT OUT  
FOR THAT PURPOSE LAST YEAR, 1769.

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After the repeated and costly expeditions which were made by the crown of Spain during the last two centuries for the exploration of the western coast of the Californias by way of the southern ocean, and for the occupation of the important Port of Monterey, this undertaking has now been happily accomplished by the two expeditions by sea and land, which in consequence of the royal command and by disposition of this superior government, were sent out from Cape San Lucas and the Presidio of Loreto in the months of January, February and March of last year.

In June of 1769 the two expeditions united at the Port of San Diego, situated in latitude  $32^{\circ} 30'$  [north], and the decision being made that the packet *San Antonio* should return to the Port of San Blas to reënforce her crew, and procure fresh provisions, the flag-packet *San Carlos* remained at anchor in the Port of San Diego, for want of the sailors who had died of scurvy. And the mission and a guard being established there, the land-expedition continued its journey through the interior of the country as far as latitude  $37^{\circ} 45'$ , in search of Monterey. But not having found it by the indications given in the old voyages and sailing-directions, and fearing a scarcity of provisions,

de Viveres, bolvió à San Diego donde con el feliz arribo del Paquebot San Antonio en Marzo de este año, tomaron los Comandantes de tierra, y mar<sup>4</sup> la oportuna resolucion de bolver à la empresa conforme à las instrucciones que llevaron para conseguirla.

Conefecto<sup>5</sup> salieron de San Diego ambas Expediciones en los dias 16. y 17. de Abril del presente, y en este segundo viage tuvo la de tierra la felicidad de hallar el Puerto de Monterrey, y de llegar à èl, el 16. de Mayo, y la de mar arribò tambien al mismo parage sin desgracia, ni mas perdida q<sup>6</sup> la de un Calafate enfermo, el 31. del proprio mes.

Ocupado assi aquel Puerto por mar, y tierra con particular complacencia de los innumerables Indios Gentiles, que pueblan todo el Pays explorado, y reconocido en los dos viages, se solemnizó la Possession el dia 3<sup>7</sup> de Junio con Instrumento autentico que extendió el Comandante en Gefe D. Gaspar de Portolà, y certificaron los demàs Oficiales de ambas Expediciones, asegurando todos ser aquel el mismo Puerto de Monterrey, con las identicas señales que describieron las Relaciones antiguas del [3] General D. Sevastian<sup>8</sup> Viscayno, y el derrotero de D. Joseph Cabrera Bueno, primer Piloto de las Naos de Philipinas.

En el dia 14. del citado mes de Junio ultimo despachó el dicho Comandante D. Gaspar de Portolà, un Correo por tierra al Presidio de Loreto, con la plausible noticia de la ocupacion de Monterrey, y de quedar estableciendo en èl la Mission, y Presidio de San Carlos; pero con el motivo de la gran distancia, aun no ha recibido este Superior Gobierno aquellos Pliegos, y en 10. del presente mes llegaron à esta Capital los que desde el Puerto de San Blas, dirigieron el mismo Portolà, el Ingeniero D. Miguel Costansò, y el Capitan D. Juan Perez, Comandante del ex-

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<sup>4</sup> mar,

<sup>5</sup> Con efecto.

<sup>6</sup> que.

<sup>7</sup> 3.

<sup>8</sup> Sebastian.

the expedition returned to San Diego, where, owing to the fortunate arrival of the packet *San Antonio* in March of this year [1770], the commanders by land and sea took the opportune resolution to renew the enterprise, in accordance with the instructions which they possessed for its accomplishment.

In fact the two expeditions set out from San Diego on the 16th and 17th days of April of the current year, and on this second journey the land-expedition had the good fortune to find the Port of Monterey, and to reach it on the 16th of May. The expedition by sea likewise arrived at the same place on the 31st of that month, without mishap or other loss than that of a sick calker.

The port being thus occupied by sea and land, with the particular goodwill of the innumerable heathen Indians who inhabit all the country explored and reconnoitered on the two journeys, possession was solemnized the 3rd day of June, with an official document which the commander-in-chief, Don Gaspar de Portolá, drew up, and which the other officers of both expeditions certified, all affirming this to be the same Port of Monterey, with the identical landmarks described in the old reports of General Don Sebastian Viscayno, and the sailing-directions of Don Joseph Cabrera Bueno, chief pilot of the ships of the Philippines.

On the 14th day of the above mentioned month of June last, the commander, Don Gaspar de Portolá, despatched a courier by land to the Presidio of Loreto with the welcome intelligence of the occupation of Monterey, and the establishment there of the Mission and Presidio of San Carlos. Owing, however, to the great distance, this superior government has not yet received those letters; but on the 10th of this month [August] there arrived at this capital from the Port of San Blas the despatches which were sent by Portolá, the engineer Don Miguel Constansó, and Captain Don Juan Perez, commander of the aforesaid

pressado Paquebot, San Antonio, alias el Principe, que salió el 9. de Julio de Monterrey; y sin embargo de ocho dias de calmas, hizo su largo viage con tan feliz celeridad que el primero de este mes hechò la ancla en San Blas.

Quedaron abundantes útiles,<sup>9</sup> y provisiones en el nuevo Presidio, y Mission de San Carlos de Monterrey, y el repuesto para un año, à fin de establecer otra Doctrina en proporcionada distancia con la advocacion de San Buenaventura; y habiendo quedado tambien por Comandante Militar de aquellos nuevos Establecimientos el Teniente de Voluntarios de Cataluña, D. Pedro Fages con mas de treinta hombres, se haze juicio que à esta fecha se le habrà unido ya el Capitan del Presidio de Loreto D. Fernando de Rivera con otros diez, y nueve Soldados, y los Baqueros, y Harrieros que conducian doscientas Reses Bacunas, y porcion de Viveres, desde [4] la nueva Mission de S.<sup>10</sup> Fernando de Villacatà, situada mas allà de la Frontera de la California antiguamente reducida; pues salió de aquel parage el 14. de Abril ultimo con destino à los expressados Puertos de San Diego, y Monterrey.

No obstante de que en este se dejaron provistos con abundancia los Almacenes ya costruidos del nuevo Presidio, y Mission à la salida del Paquebot San Antonio, y de que en el de San Diego se regulan anclados los otros dos Paquebots de Su Magestad,<sup>11</sup> San Carlos, y San Joseph, dispone este Superior Gobierno que en fines de Octubre proximo buelva el San Antonio à emprender tercer viage desde el Puerto de San Blas, y que conduzca nuevas provisiones,<sup>12</sup> y treinta Religiosos Fernandinos de la ultima Mission que vino de España, para que en el dilatado, y fertil Pays, reconocido por la Expedicion de tierra desde la antigua Frontera de la California, hasta el Puerto de San Francisco, poco distante, y mas al Norte del de Monterrey, se erijan

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<sup>9</sup> útiles.

<sup>10</sup> San.

<sup>11</sup> Mag.

<sup>12</sup> Provisiones.



packet *San Antonio*, otherwise called *El Principe*, which sailed on the 9th of July from Monterey, and, notwithstanding eight days of calm, made its long voyage with such fortunate speed that on the first day of this month it cast anchor at San Blas.

In the new Presidio and Mission of San Carlos de Monterey there were left abundant utensils and provisions, and stores for one year, for the purpose of establishing another mission at a suitable distance under the protection of San Buenaventura. And Don Pedro Fages, the lieutenant of Catalan volunteers, having also remained as military commander of those new establishments with more than thirty men, it is to be presumed that by this date the captain of the Presidio of Loreto, Don Fernando de Rivera, will have joined him, with nineteen soldiers more, and the drovers and muleteers who took two hundred head of cattle, and rations, from the new Mission of San Fernando de Villacatá, situated beyond the frontier of California as formerly defined, inasmuch as he left that place on the 14th of April last bound for the aforesaid Ports of San Diego and Monterey.

Notwithstanding the fact that at the latter port, on the departure of the packet *San Antonio*, the warehouses already constructed for the new presidio and mission were left abundantly provided, and that in the Port of San Diego lie anchored the other two packets of His Majesty, the *San Carlos* and *San Joseph*, this superior government directs that in the latter part of October next the *San Antonio* shall return and make a third voyage from the Port of San Blas, and take fresh stores and thirty missionaries from the College of San Fernando of the last company that came from Spain, in order that in the vast and fertile country, explored by the land-expedition, extending from the former frontier of California as far as the Port of San Francisco, a short distance from and to the north of the Port of Monterey, new missions may be established, and that

nuevas Misiones, y se logre la dichosa oportunidad que ofrece la mansedumbre, y buena indole de los innumerables Indios Gentiles que habitan la California Septentrional.

En prueba de esta feliz disposicion con que se halla aquella numerosa, y docilissima Gentilidad, assegura el Comandante D. Gaspar de Portolà, y en lo mismo convienen los demàs Oficiales, y los Padres Missioneros, que nuestros Españoles quedan en Monterrey tan seguros, como si estuvieran en medio de esta Capital, bien que el nuevo Presidio se ha dexado suficientemente guarnecido con Artilleria, Tropa, y abundantes municiones de guerra; y el [5] Reverendo Padre Presidente de las Misiones destinado à la de Monterrey refiere muy por menor, y con especial gozo la afavilidad de los Indios, y la promesa que ya le havian hecho de entregarle sus hijos para instruirlos en los Misterios de nuestra Sagrada, y Catholica Religion; añadiendo aquel exemplar, y zeloso Ministro de ella, la circunstanciada noticia de las Missas Solemnes que se havian celebrado desde el arribo de ambas Expediciones hasta la salida del Paquebot San Antonio, y de la Solemne Procession del Santissimo Sacramento, que se hizo en el dia del Corpus 14. de Junio, con otras particularidades que acreditan la especial providencia con que Dios se ha dignado favorecer el buen exito de estas Expediciones en premio sin duda del ardiente zelo de Nuestro Augusto Soberano, cuya piedad incomparable reconoce, como primera obligacion de su Corona Real en estos vastos Dominios, la extencion de la Fè de Jesu-Christo,<sup>13</sup> y la felicidad de los mizeros Gentiles que gimen sin conocimiento de ella, en la tirana esclavitud del enemigo comun.

Por no retardar esta importantissima noticia, se ha formado en breve compendio la presente Relacion de ella sin esperar los primeros pliegos despachados por tierra desde Monterrey, entre tanto que con ellos, los diarios de los viages por mar y tierra, y

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<sup>13</sup> Jesu Christo

advantage may be taken of the fortunate opportunity presented by the peaceableness and good disposition of the innumerable heathen Indians that inhabit Northern California.

In proof of the kindly nature which characterizes that vast and most docile body of heathen, the commander, Don Gaspar de Portolá, declares, and in this the other officers and the missionary fathers concur, that our Spaniards are as free from danger in Monterey as if they were in the midst of this capital, although the new presidio has been left sufficiently equipped with artillery, troops, and ample munitions of war. And the Reverend Father President of the Missions [Serra], assigned to the charge of Monterey, mentions, in detail and with particular satisfaction, the affability of the Indians, and the promise which they had already made him, to intrust their children to him to instruct them in the mysteries of our holy Catholic religion. That pattern and zealous minister of our religion adding a minute account of the solemn masses which had been celebrated from the arrival of the two expeditions to the departure of the packet *San Antonio*, and of the solemn procession of the most holy sacrament, which took place on the day of Corpus Christi, the 14th of June, with other noteworthy events that prove the special providence with which God has deigned to favor the successful issue of these expeditions, as a reward, doubtless, for the fervent zeal of our august sovereign, whose incomparable piety acknowledges as the highest obligation of his royal crown in these vast dominions, the extension of the faith of Jesus Christ, and the welfare of the wretched heathen, who being without knowledge of the gospel, groan under the tyrannical bondage of the common enemy.

That there may be no delay in giving out this most important intelligence, the present account has been drawn up in condensed form, without waiting for the first despatches sent by land from Monterey, inasmuch as with them, and the diaries of the voy-

los demás Documentos, se puede dar à su tiempo una obra completa de ambas Expediciones.

Mexico 16. de Agosto de 1770.

Con licencia y orden, del Ex<sup>m</sup>o. Señor Virrey. En la Imprenta del Superior Gobierno.

ages by sea and land, and the rest of the documents, there can be given in due time a complete account of both expeditions.

Mexico, 16th of August, 1770.

By permission and command of his excellency, the viceroy.  
In the printing-office of the superior government.



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2. The Official Account of the Portolá Expedition of 1769-1770, edited by Frederick J. Teggart. August, 1909. .10
3. The Diary of Gaspar de Portolá, 11th May, 1769-24th January, 1770, translated by Donald Eugene Smith. September, 1909.
4. Costansó's Historical Account of the Portolá Expedition, edited by Frederick J. Teggart. October, 1909.
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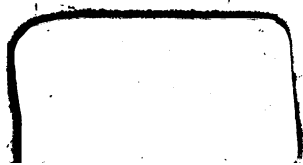
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