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# Revolt at Mission San Gabriel, October 25, 1785: Judicial Proceedings and Related Documents

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## REVOLT AT MISSION SAN GABRIEL

October 25, 1785

*Judicial Proceedings and Related Documents*

Translated from Spanish to English by  
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In this section, we present English translations of the Spanish documents which relate to the planned Mission San Gabriel uprising in 1785. The documents come from two sources, the Archivo General de la Nación in Mexico City and the Santa Bárbara Mission Archive-Library.

The documents from the *Archivo General* are located in *ramo Provincias Internas, tomo 120, expediente 2*. Our translation follows the order in which the documents are presented in this source. The first paragraph is the title page of the *expediente*. The documents follow as they are arranged, with one exception: the questions which the interrogator posed to the four witnesses are only listed once in the documents. The witnesses' answers are preceded by a brief phrase, *a la primera*, (to the first [question]), *a la segunda* (to the second [question]), and so forth. For ease of reading, we decided to repeat the questions before each answer given by each of the witnesses.

The Santa Bárbara Mission Archive-Library documents are taken from the "California Mission Documents" collection. The numbering of these documents has changed since the 1947 pub-

lication of Fr. Maynard Geiger's volume *Calendar of Documents in the Santa Bárbara Mission Archives*. Archive-Library Director Lynn Bremer has posted new finding guides with the updated numbers online at <http://www.sbmal.org/histdocs.html>.

We regret that space limitations make it impossible for us to present the Spanish text along side our English translation. We are working to make the Spanish text available online, and, if we are successful, we will provide you with the web link by way of the *Correo*, the CMSA electronic newsletter.

## PROVINCIAS INTERNAS 120

*Provincia de Californias*

Judicial proceedings conducted by Sergeant José Ignacio Olivera, on the orders of the Governor, against a neophyte Indian from Mission San Gabriel named Nicolás José, two other gentile Indian men, and a gentile Indian woman, accused of being leaders of the uprising committed against the Fathers and the escort of that mission on the night of October 25, 1785.

## EXPEDIENTE NO. 2

Because Your Grace took the necessary steps that I prescribed for you to apprehend the Christian and gentile Indians who participated in the uprising at this mission the night of last October 25, we have managed to imprison all of them. The judicial proceedings that have been conducted up until now have resulted in a general charge against all the Indians for leading the others astray. The principal leaders are two gentile Indian men, one gentile Indian woman, and the neophyte Nicolás José. I advise Your Grace to proceed and take down the confessions of these four criminals. Use effective means of persuasion to put pressure on them to answer the following list of questions truthfully. The soldier José María Pico, a Spaniard, will serve as interpreter and ask them the questions. I am confident that he is capable of doing this because he knows the language of these natives well.

### *Interrogation*

FIRST QUESTION: *Previously, when it was discovered that they [the Indians] were plotting to kill the Indian from Baja California as well as the Fathers and soldiers, had they not been warned by the Governor, by the Lieutenant from San Diego, and by the very same Fathers that if they tried to commit a similar act they would be severely punished?*

SECOND QUESTION: *After they had been warned and advised repeatedly to keep the peace and tranquility, why did they come armed to kill the Fathers and the soldiers when they had never been harmed by us at all?*

THIRD QUESTION: *What prompted them to come in that manner, knowing that it was impossible to kill the soldiers, for with one shot from the cannon many of them would have died?*

FOURTH QUESTION: *Have they been harmed in any*

*way by the soldiers, by the Fathers, or by the other Christians which would make them want to kill them?*

FIFTH QUESTION: *Who all banded together to plan the assault and who was the leader?*

SIXTH QUESTION: *Who was the Christian they obeyed the most and who was the first person to propose the attack?*

SEVENTH QUESTION: *Were the sheep they would kill at night stolen from the corral or the fields? Who committed these acts? Did the shepherds allow this or not?*

EIGHTH QUESTION: *What weapons did they bring for fighting, and who provided them?*

NINTH QUESTION: *How many and which rancherías banded together and where?*

TENTH QUESTION: *Do they understand why they are imprisoned and the reason why the Governor, the Lieutenant, the Fathers, and all the soldiers are so angry with them? And, do they understand the just punishment they deserve?*

The judicial proceedings will be drawn up in this manner in my presence and in the presence of Corporals José Verdugo and Manuel Vargas, who will be the two witnesses. They will sign the documents, as will Your Grace and the interpreter. You will then bring the prisoners face to face with one another and compare their statements one against the other. After the process has been carried out in this manner, Your Grace will send me the original documents. Based on that information, I can determine what should be done next.

San Gabriel, January 3, 1786

Pedro Fages



On January 3, 1786 at Mission San Gabriel, I, José Ignacio Olivera, Sergeant of the Santa Bárbara presidio company, went to the guard house of



the mission escort to carry out the order from my superior the governor, *don Pedro Fages*. The prisoners who had taken part in the uprising the night of October 25 were being held there. I began the prescribed judicial proceedings by having the gentile Indian Temejasaquichí appear before me. He is accused of being one of the instigators of the uprising. He was persuaded by the interpreter to respond truthfully to the questions he would be asked.

FIRST QUESTION: *Previously, when it was discovered that they [the Indians] were plotting to kill the Indian from Baja California as well as the Fathers and soldiers, had they not been warned by the Governor, by the Lieutenant from San Diego, and by the very same Fathers that if they tried to commit a similar act they would be severely punished?*

REPLY: He said that he does not know anything.

SECOND QUESTION: *After they had been warned and advised repeatedly to keep the peace and tranquility, why did they come armed to kill the Fathers and the soldiers when they had never been harmed by us at all?*

REPLY: He said that it is true that he came with the desire to fight, but he was not angry with anyone.

THIRD QUESTION: *What prompted them to come in that manner, knowing that it was impossible to kill the soldiers, for with one shot from the cannon many of them would have died?*

REPLY: He said that the gentile Indian woman Toypurina tricked him into coming and the Christian Nicolás got him worked up about the attack.

FOURTH QUESTION: *Have they been harmed in any way by the soldiers, by the Fathers, or by the other Christians which would make them want to kill them?*

REPLY: He said no.

FIFTH QUESTION: *Who all banded together to plan the assault and who was the leader?*

REPLY: He said that the woman Toypurina and Nicolás were the only ones. All the others were only invited and encouraged by the two of them.

SIXTH QUESTION: *Who was the Christian they obeyed the most and who was the first person to propose the attack?*

REPLY: He said that Nicolás was the only one.

SEVENTH QUESTION: *Were the sheep they would kill at night stolen from the corral or the fields? Who committed these acts? Did the shepherds allow this or not?*

REPLY: He said that he did not participate in such a robbery or killing, but he knows that the shepherds gave the animals to those who were eating them. But he did not eat or see it happen.

EIGHTH QUESTION: *What weapons did they bring for fighting, and who provided them?*

REPLY: He said, only bows and arrows, which they themselves made.

NINTH QUESTION: *How many and which rancherías banded together and where?*

REPLY: He said that four *rancherías* came with all their people, and some other Indians came from other *rancherías*. One of the *rancherías* that came in its entirety was Azucavít. That was where they banded together. The woman is from the *ranchería* called Jachivít and everyone from that *ranchería* came. Their chief is the brother of that woman who is one of the prisoners.

TENTH QUESTION: *Do they understand why they are imprisoned and the reason why the Governor, the Lieutenant, the Fathers, and all the soldiers are so angry with them? And, do they understand the just punishment they deserve?*

REPLY: He said yes, he knows that he has done wrong, that he is rightly imprisoned, that he deserves punishment, and that we are angry with him and his people.

When asked if he invited others to participate after the woman and the Christian Nicolás had

invited him, he responded that he did not persuade anyone else.

After effective means of persuasion were employed to make sure he said everything that he knows and did not hide the truth, he said that everything he has said is the truth and he has nothing more to say. He added that he is the Chief of the *ranchería* of Juvit and since his people were already headed that way he told them, "Let's fight." With this the inquiry was concluded, I signed it, as did the attending witnesses and the interpreter, at the mission, on the day, month, and year previously stated.

José Ignacio Olivera  
José María Verdugo (in attendance)  
Manuel Vargas (in attendance)  
José Pico



Immediately after, I, the Sergeant, had the gentile Indian woman named Toypurina appear before me. She is accused of being an instigator of the uprising that was carried out by the other Indians the night of October 25. She was persuaded by the interpreter to reply truthfully to the questions asked.

FIRST QUESTION: *Previously, when it was discovered that they [the Indians] were plotting to kill the Indian from Baja California as well as the Fathers and soldiers, had they not been warned by the Governor, by the Lieutenant from San Diego, and by the very same Fathers that if they tried to commit a similar act they would be severely punished?*

REPLY: She said that she knows nothing.

SECOND QUESTION: *After they had been warned and advised repeatedly to keep the peace and tranquility, why did they come armed to kill the Fathers and the soldiers when they had never been harmed by us at all?*

REPLY: She said that it is true that she ordered Chief Tomasajaquichi to go and persuade the

Christians not to believe the Fathers, but rather only her. She advised him to do this because she was angry with the Fathers and with all the others at this mission, because we are living here on their land.

THIRD QUESTION: *What prompted them to come in that manner, knowing that it was impossible to kill the soldiers, for with one shot from the cannon many of them would have died?*

REPLY: She said that she came with the others because the Indian Nicolás José persuaded her to do so. He gave her some beads. And, she came to encourage them to be brave and fight.

FOURTH QUESTION: *Have they been harmed in any way by the soldiers, by the Fathers, or by the other Christians which would make them want to kill them?*

REPLY: She said that the only harm they have caused her is that we are living here and that does not sit well with her.

FIFTH QUESTION: *Who all banded together to plan the assault and who was the leader?*

REPLY: She said that Nicolás José was the first one to bring the chiefs together, with her influence, which he persuaded her to use.

SIXTH QUESTION: *Who was the Christian they obeyed the most and who was the first person to propose the attack?*

REPLY: She said that Nicolás was the only one.

SEVENTH QUESTION: *Were the sheep they would kill at night stolen from the corral or the fields? Who committed these acts? Did the shepherds allow this or not?*

REPLY: She said that Nicolás sent others out to take the lambs and he offered her some. But she does not know anything about the shepherds. And, Nicolás also ordered that three head of cattle be taken, but they did not take them.

EIGHTH QUESTION: *What weapons did they bring for fighting, and who provided them?*



REPLY: She said that she did not carry any weapons.

NINTH QUESTION: *How many and which rancherías banded together and where?*

REPLY: She said that six rancherías came with their chiefs, as well as some other Indians from other rancherías.

TENTH QUESTION: *Do they understand why they are imprisoned and the reason why the Governor, the Lieutenant, the Fathers, and all the soldiers are so angry with them? And, do they understand the just punishment they deserve?*

REPLY: She said yes, she understands everything.

When asked if she had anything else to add about Nicolás or about any of the Christians, she said no, that everything she had said is the whole truth. With this the inquiry was concluded, I signed it, as did the attending witnesses and the interpreter, at the mission, on the day, month, and year previously stated. I attest to this.

José Ignacio Olivera  
José María Verdugo (in attendance)  
Manuel Vargas (in attendance)  
José Pico



On January 3, 1786 at Mission San Gabriel, I, Sergeant José Ignacio Olivera, continued with these proceedings by having the gentile Ajiyivi appear before me. He is recognized as the chief of the ranchería of Jajamovi, which is three leagues away from this mission. He was one of the Indians arrested inside the patio the night of the uprising. He was urged to respond truthfully to what he would be asked.

FIRST QUESTION: *Previously, when it was discovered that they [the Indians] were plotting to kill the Indian from Baja California as well as the Fathers and soldiers, had they not been warned by the Governor,*

*by the Lieutenant from San Diego, and by the very same Fathers that if they tried to commit a similar act they would be severely punished?*

REPLY: He said that he did not know about it.

SECOND QUESTION: *After they had been warned and advised repeatedly to keep the peace and tranquility, why did they come armed to kill the Fathers and the soldiers when they had never been harmed by us at all?*

REPLY: When asked [the question], he gave the same answer.

THIRD QUESTION: *What prompted them to come in that manner, knowing that it was impossible to kill the soldiers, for with one shot from the cannon many of them would have died?*

REPLY: He said that he came because he happened to meet up with the rebels and knew that they were on their way to fight. Seeing that they were so spirited, he wanted to go and see if they really were as brave as they said, but nobody invited him to join them.

FOURTH QUESTION: *Have they been harmed in any way by the soldiers, by the Fathers, or by the other Christians which would make them want to kill them?*

REPLY: He said that he has not been harmed in any way, nor does he have any other motive than what he said in the previous answer.

FIFTH QUESTION: *Who all banded together to plan the assault and who was the leader?*

REPLY: He said that he does not know anything more than what he has already said.

SIXTH QUESTION: *Who was the Christian they obeyed the most and who was the first person to propose the attack?*

REPLY: He said that the Indian Nicolás José and the gentile Toypurina were the ones who gave orders to everybody.

SEVENTH QUESTION: *Were the sheep they would kill at night stolen from the corral or the fields? Who committed these acts? Did the shepherds allow this or not?*

REPLY: He said that he did not know anything at all.

EIGHTH QUESTION: *What weapons did they bring for fighting, and who provided them?*

REPLY: He said that he did not bring his bow and his arrows.

NINTH QUESTION: *How many and which rancherías banded together and where?*

REPLY: He said that he found out that there were five, while on the way to the mission.

TENTH QUESTION: *Do they understand why they are imprisoned and the reason why the Governor, the Lieutenant, the Fathers, and all the soldiers are so angry with them? And, do they understand the just punishment they deserve?*

REPLY: He said yes, he understands everything.

It was determined that the declarant ordered the people from his *ranchería* to kill two cows that belonged to a soldier of this escort. I asked him if this had happened a few days before the uprising and I put pressure on him to tell the truth. He responded that it is true that he ordered the killing but they did not do it. That is why he and his nephew went and killed the cows.

After asking him repeatedly to say as much as he knows, he said that what he had declared is the whole truth and as much as he knows. When this inquiry was concluded, I signed it, as did the attending witnesses and the interpreter on the day, month, and year previously stated. I attest to this.

José Ignacio Olivera

José María Verdugo (in attendance)

Manuel Vargas (in attendance)

José Pico



I, the Sergeant, immediately had the Indian Nicolás José, a neophyte from this mission, appear before me. He was married at the mission.

He is about thirty-three years old. I made him understand that justice obligated him to tell the truth so that God can help him or else God will punish him. This being understood, he promised not to withhold anything that he might know with regard to what he would be asked.

FIRST QUESTION: *Previously, when it was discovered that they [the Indians] were plotting to kill the Indian from Baja California as well as the Fathers and soldiers, had they not been warned by the Governor, by the Lieutenant from San Diego, and by the very same Fathers that if they tried to commit a similar act they would be severely punished?*

REPLY: He said yes, he remembers everything because he was one of the people imprisoned for that reason.

SECOND QUESTION: *After they had been warned and advised repeatedly to keep the peace and tranquility, why did they come armed to kill the Fathers and the soldiers when they had never been harmed by us at all?*

REPLY: He said that even though he remembered that pardon, it was embedded in his heart to do this.

THIRD QUESTION: *What prompted them to come in that manner, knowing that it was impossible to kill the soldiers, for with one shot from the cannon many of them would have died?*

REPLY: He said that it was because he was angry with the Fathers and the corporal for not allowing him to perform his dances and gentle indecencies.

FOURTH QUESTION: *Have they been harmed in any way by the soldiers, by the Fathers, or by the other Christians which would make them want to kill them?*

REPLY: He said that it was for the same reason as in the previous answer.

FIFTH QUESTION: *Who all banded together to plan the assault and who was the leader?*



REPLY: He said that he himself went to avail himself of the gentile Indian woman Toypurina. He gave her beads so that she would recruit the rest of the gentiles. And, he invited or recruited the Christians.

SIXTH QUESTION: *Who was the Christian they obeyed the most and who was the first person to propose the attack?*

REPLY: He said that he alone was the driving force behind it all.

SEVENTH QUESTION: *Were the sheep they would kill at night stolen from the corral or the fields? Who committed these acts? Did the shepherds allow this or not?*

REPLY: He said that he ordered the others to come and take the sheep and that they would take them right from under the shepherds' noses.

EIGHTH QUESTION: *What weapons did they bring for fighting, and who provided them?*

REPLY: He said, bows and arrows, that they themselves made.

NINTH QUESTION: *How many and which rancherías banded together and where?*

REPLY: He said that five [*rancherías*] from the mountains, three from the valley, and some other Indians from other [*rancherías*].

TENTH QUESTION: *Do they understand why they are imprisoned and the reason why the Governor, the Lieutenant, the Fathers, and all the soldiers are so angry with them? And, do they understand the just punishment they deserve?*

REPLY: He said yes, he understands everything.

When asked if he has more to say or if he can accuse others who might be guilty like him, he said no, and what he has said is the truth, he knows nothing more.

When asked if the gentile chief Tomasajaquichi advised him about anything, he said no, that he alone and the woman Toypurina were the cause of everything. When this inquiry was concluded,

I signed it, as did the witnesses and the interpreter. I attest to this.

José Ignacio Olivera  
José María Verdugo (in attendance)  
Manuel Vargas (in attendance)  
José Pico



Immediately after, I, the Sergeant, had the gentile Indian woman Toypurina appear before me in the presence of the accused Nicolás José, so that they would come face to face with one another. After warning them to tell the truth, Nicolás was apprised of the accused woman's statement, point by point. They both agreed that their mutual accusations are true. Seeing that they do not differ or contradict one another on any point, I had the gentile Tomasajaquichi appear before the two of them. In the presence of both of them he corroborated what they had said. The three of them assert that they did not recruit Chief Ajillivij. And, as he has stated, he happened upon them and added himself to the group. After that, I warned them to say if they were lying about anything, because if they were, they would be punished more severely for this. They avowed that it was the whole truth. Nicolás added that most of those who took part did so because they were afraid of Toypurina, whom they considered to be very crafty and who would kill them by merely willing it to happen.

Whereupon, having concluded these judicial proceedings, I send them on to the superior hands of the governor, so that you can arrive at an appropriate decision based on the information. I signed it at the mission, on the day, month, and year previously stated. I attest to this.

José Ignacio Olivera  
José María Verdugo (in attendance)  
Manuel Vargas (in attendance)  
José Pico





San Gabriel, January 4, 1786

In view of the fact that all the Christians and gentiles accused of participating in the uprising that took place at this mission the night of last October 25 were questioned in straightforward terms, the record of the above proceedings shows that the Indian neophyte Nicolás José and the gentile Indian woman named Toypurina are guilty in fact and in law of being the principal instigators and leaders. Both of them will be held under tight security; he at the presidio of San Diego and she at this mission. The gentile Indian named Tomasajaquichi will be held under the same conditions at the presidio. In addition to having been an accomplice, he is guilty of coming beforehand, sent by Toypurina, to corrupt the Christians with her spells. The same punishment will be given to Chief Ajillivit for being an accomplice in the uprising, for confessing to killing the cows both before this affair and also more recently, and for being found in the Fathers' house the night of the uprising, weapon in hand. I, personally, will transport the three Indians to the presidio of San Diego where they will be kept under the same tight security under which the woman will be kept at the mission. In the meantime, if the *Señor Comandante General* would be so good as to inform me of what he deems appropriate in light of these judicial proceedings, a report will then be sent back to you.

The rest of the prisoners are accused of being accomplices and are in the guard house. In addition to the time they have spent in prison, each of the five Indians who participated in the matter pertaining to the first question will receive the punishment of twenty to twenty-five lashes as a means of changing their behavior. This punishment will be carried out in the presence of everyone so as to serve as a warning to all. They will receive from

me the most serious reprimand regarding their lack of gratitude. I will reproach them for their wickedness. And, I will show them how they were tricked into allowing themselves to be controlled by the woman whose cunning acts have no power against those of us who are Catholics.

With these and other appropriate admonitions, they will be set free with the precautionary warning that the slightest indication that they are reverting to their previous behavior will not be tolerated. We will make them understand that they are being punished with moderation, out of compassion and love we have for them. For in that manner, we can assure ourselves that they are completely reformed. A copy of the testimony from these judicial proceedings will be made for the archive of this office.

Pedro Fages

#### Special consideration

According to what I have been told by the Reverend Father Ministers of this mission, the gentile Indian woman Toypurina who is accused in this case, wants to become a Christian. And, it is known for certain that the gentile Indians who participated in the uprising did so because she persuaded them to do so and because they respected and feared her and her superstitions. They are threatening to kill her if she is set free because she tricked them and they have been punished for what she did. The governor appeals to his superior, the *Señor Comandante General*, to be so kind to advise him as to whether the woman could be transferred to another mission far from this one if she were to be baptized. There she can make a home for herself, get married, and remain free from the danger described above.

Pedro Fages



*Señor Comandante General*

A report on the overall tranquility of the peninsula

My dear Sir:

In a letter dated last November 5, the commander of the presidio of San Diego informs me that the Christian and gentile Indians of Mission San Gabriel, tricked by a superstitious gentile woman, burst into the living quarters of the missionary Fathers during the night of October 25 with the intention of killing them. The Indians believed that the soldiers had already been killed by the female instigator. However, when the corporal of the escort found out about the plot, he put himself on alert and took defensive measures. He was able to frighten them without either side resorting to weapons. When the Indians saw that they had been tricked, they fled in fear.

As soon as the commander was alerted, he sent reinforcements and informed me of everything. When I received the news, I was focused on matters dealing with the ship from the Philippines that was anchored in this port. But, I quickly prescribed the appropriate measures for apprehending the leaders. As soon as I am free from the business at hand, I will head to the mission to do whatever is necessary. I will then provide Your Lordship with an appropriate report since the rest of the Peninsula is tranquil and there is nothing new to report at this time.

May God keep the important life of Your Lordship many years.

Monterrey, December 5, 1785

Your most attentive servant and subject kisses the hand of Your Lordship,

Pedro Fages

*Señor Coronel don José Antonio Rengel*



*Señor Comandante General*

A report on the situation of the governor, Mission San Gabriel, and rulings he has made.

My dear Sir:

In view of what I reported to Your Lordship in official letter No. 289 dated the 5th of this month, regarding the incident at Mission San Gabriel, I left Monterrey on the 14th of the month and arrived at the mission on the 27th, with nothing of consequence to report in the intervening period.

I found seven Christian Indians and four gentiles, including the woman instigator of the uprising, in custody along with a few other Indians of both types who are considered guilty parties. The principal leaders are the Indian woman, two gentile chiefs, and an Indian neophyte named Nicolás José. I am preparing the official indictments against each of them and will provide Your Lordship with a report. In the meantime, they will be kept under tight security. The rest of the Indians will receive the punishment of fifteen to twenty lashes. And after receiving a strong warning from me and the Fathers to reform their ways, they will be set free.

I have strongly reprimanded the other Christian Indians from the pueblo of this mission, making them see their error. They are remorseful and understand. They vow to amend their ways. I believe that what I have ordered and what I hope Your Lordship will be so kind as to decide based on the indictment, will be sufficient for the Indians to learn their lesson.

I am sending this official letter to Your Lordship with the hope that it will arrive quickly and put Your Lordship's mind at ease regarding the concerns expressed in the first communication.

May God keep the important life of Your Lordship many years.

San Gabriel, December 30, 1785



Your most attentive servant and subject kisses the hand of Your Lordship,

Pedro Fages  
*Señor Coronel don José Antonio Rengel*



*Señor Comandante General*  
Chihuahua, May 19, 1786

Attach the two official letters numbered 289 and 290 to this letter and to the judicial proceedings. Send everything to the *Señor Asesor*.

Ugarte

My dear Sir:

I place in the hands of Your Lordship, my superior, the judicial proceedings that I ordered be conducted in my presence by Sergeant José Ignacio Olivera of the presidio of Santa Bárbara, against the four Indians accused of being the principal leaders of the uprising carried out at this mission the night of last October 25. I have given an account of this to Your Lordship in official letters numbered 289 and 290 dated last December 5 and 30, so that based on the information you will be so kind as to judge what is appropriate.

The sixteen Indian accomplices have been punished and strongly reprimanded by me in the manner I explained at the end of the judicial proceedings. I am preparing to leave to transport the three Indians accused of being the principals in this case to the presidio of San Diego where I will await the decision of Your Lordship as my superior. In fulfillment of my obligations, I will inform you of everything.

May God keep the important life of Your Lordship many years.

San Gabriel, January 5, 1786

Your most attentive servant and subject kisses the hand of Your Lordship,

Pedro Fages  
*Señor Coronel don José Antonio Rengel*

[The following communication is written in the margins of the previous letter.]

The judicial proceedings conducted by José Ignacio Olivera, sergeant of the presidio of Santa Bárbara, that were sent by the governor of the Californias along with his report dated January 5 of last year, indicate that on the night of October 25, 1785, a number of gentile Indians from the nearby *rancherías* forced their way into Mission San Gabriel. They were armed and intent on killing the missionary Fathers and the soldiers of the escort there to protect them. The Indians were not successful in their attempt. The soldiers, who had received advanced notice, were waiting for the Indians and managed to surprise and apprehend them. The Indians had no opportunity to make a move. The neophyte Indian Nicolás José, who was from the mission, and the gentile Indian woman Toypurina, who was from the *ranchería* Jaichivit, were the principal instigators of that plot. Toypurina was reputed to be the most clever and shrewd among those of her nation. According to Nicolás José's statement, he was angry with the Fathers and with the corporal of the escort because they would not allow him to perform his dances and his gentile indecencies. Nicolás José availed himself of Toypurina so that she would induce the Indians to revolt. He gave her beads and other trinkets to persuade her to act on his request, which she in fact did. She lured the six *rancherías* into banding together for the fight. She made them believe that when they arrived at the mission they would find the Fathers dead as a result of her crafty powers. The only thing the Indians would have to do would be to overpower the corporal and the soldiers, whom they would catch off guard and unprepared. She confessed to this and said it was because of Nicolás José's bad influence on her and also because she was angry with the Fathers and the rest of the people from the mission because they had gone to live and settle on their land. And finally, the gentile Chief Temasajaquichi was caught,

weapons in hand, amidst the rest of the Indians who took part in the event. He was tricked by Toypurina and induced the others to join him. Another gentile chief named Ajillibi, who was not invited to participate, confessed to taking part in the uprising motivated out of curiosity. He happened to come upon the rebels when they were headed for the mission and heard them bragging about their brave deeds. So, he wanted to go and see how brave they really were.

The proceedings indicate that the governor punished each of the Indians arrested that night with twenty or twenty-five lashes and then set them free and sent them back to their *rancherías*, well-reprimanded and repentant for being victims of a trick. However, they were determined to kill the Indian Toypurina whenever they could get their hands on her, as revenge for her having tricked them. To prevent this from happening, the governor left Toypurina imprisoned at the same mission whose Fathers had informed him that she was asking to become a Christian. To that end and to prevent further uprisings, the governor took the prisoners— the neophyte Nicolás José and the gentile chiefs Temasajquichi and Ajillivit— under tight security to the presidio of San Diego. Under no circumstances is it advisable for the Indian Toypurina to remain at the mission. Nor should the neophyte Nicolás return to the mission because of the known risk that they might induce the natives to participate in further uprisings. It seems to me that the punishment for Nicolás could also serve as an example for the rest. Therefore, if Your Lordship is so inclined, you could sentence the Indian Nicolás José to perpetual banishment from Mission San Gabriel and assign him to six years of hard labor at one of the presidios on the peninsula—one that is farthest away from the mission. He would receive food but no wage and would wear a shackle around one foot. The governor should be alerted to the fact that once Nicolás has completed his sentence, he should assign him

to another mission as far away as possible where there is no risk of his escaping and returning to live amidst his own people. Your Lordship could also sentence the Indian Toypurina to perpetual banishment from Mission San Gabriel and order that she be assigned and transported to one of the more distant missions where there will be no chance of her returning to be with her relatives or of causing further uprisings with her influence and tricks. Your Lordship could also agree to suggest to the governor that he set the gentile chiefs Temasajaquichi and Algivillit free and send them back to their *rancherías*, unless he has a serious objection. The reason for this is that they were lured and tricked into taking part in the uprising and have already suffered through two years of their prison sentence. And, Algivillit was motivated out of curiosity and had no intention or plan to cause any harm whatsoever. The chiefs would be made to understand that even though they deserve a harsh punishment, they are being treated with compassion and pity because they were lured and tricked. They would be warned not to become involved in similar excesses under any circumstances, because if they do, they will receive the harshest punishment they deserve, including death. However, Your Lordship can also arrive at a decision that is more to your liking.

Arispe, December 1, 1787

Galindo Navarro

Arispe, December 14, 1787  
Opinion of the *Señor Asesor*  
Ugarte



In compliance with what was set forth by the *Señor Asesor* in the decree dated today, and in light of the judicial proceedings conducted against the three Indian males and the Indian female, all natives of that peninsula, accused of being the prin-



principal instigators of the uprising they carried out last year on October 25, 1785 at Mission San Gabriel, I have decided to sentence the neophyte Nicolás José to six years on a work gang at the presidio that is farthest away from Mission San Gabriel. He will receive no wage and will have a shackle around one foot. He will be perpetually banished from the mission. After he has completed his sentence, Your Grace will send him to another mission far away where there is no risk of his escaping and returning to live among his people. In addition, I have sentenced the Indian woman Toypurina to perpetual banishment from Mission San Gabriel. She should be taken to another mission far away where she will neither harbor any hope of uniting with her relatives nor involve them in any further uprisings with her power and tricks. And, with regard to the two gentile chiefs, Temasajaquichi and Agivivit, who were lured and tricked into participating in the uprising and have suffered more than two years imprisonment, I advise Your Grace to set them free and send them back to their *rancherías*, should you have no serious objection. The chiefs should be made to understand that even though they deserve a harsh punishment, they are being treated with compassion and pity because they were provoked by the Indian woman. However, if under any circumstances they become involved in similar excesses, they will receive the harshest punishment they deserve, including death. I convey this to Your Grace for your information and appropriate implementation.

Before Our Lord God  
Arispe, December 14, 1787

Fages



California Mission Documents #76

In compliance with what was set forth by the *Señor Asesor* in the decree dated today and in light of the judicial proceedings conducted against the

three Indian males and the Indian female, natives of that peninsula, accused of being the principal instigators of the uprising they carried out last year on October 25, 1785 at Mission San Gabriel, I have decided to sentence the neophyte Nicolás José to six years on a work gang at the presidio that is farthest away from Mission San Gabriel. He will receive no wage and will have a shackle around one foot. He will be perpetually banished from the mission. After he has completed his sentence, Your Grace will send him to another mission far away where there is no risk of his escaping and returning to live among his people. In addition, I have sentenced the Indian woman Toypurina to perpetual banishment from Mission San Gabriel. She should be taken to another mission far away where she will neither harbor any hope of uniting with her relatives nor involve them in any further uprisings with her power and tricks. And, with regard to the two gentile chiefs, Temasajaquichi and Agivivit, who were lured and tricked into participating in the uprising and have suffered more than two years imprisonment, I advise Your Grace to set them free and send them back to their *rancherías*, should you have no serious objection. The chiefs should be made to understand that even though they deserve a harsh punishment, they are being treated with compassion and pity because they were provoked by the Indian woman. However, if under any circumstances they become involved in similar excesses, they will receive the harshest punishment they deserve, including death.

God keep Your Grace many years

Arispe, December 12, 1787=Jacobo Ugarte y Loyola= Sor. [*Señor*] don Pedro Fages

I certify that this is a copy of the original.

Monterrey, June 15, 1788

Fages



California Mission Documents #79  
Very Reverend Father President

My dear Sir,

The Indian neophytes Carlos, from Mission San Diego, and María Regina, alias Toypurina, from Mission San Gabriel, are sentenced to perpetual banishment by the *Señor Comandante General*. I have decided that Carlos will serve his sentence at Mission Santa Clara along with another neophyte, Agustín Merino from San Vicente. María Regina will be sent to San Antonio.

In order to avoid the difficulties that would be caused by separating the wives from the two men mentioned above, it seems to me that it would be beneficial to send their women and any children they have to live with them. With this goal in mind, Agustín's wife will be sent to San Diego. Today I will make arrangements for Lieutenant *don* José de Zúñiga to safely transport her to this presidio and from here I will arrange for her to arrive safely and reunite with her husband at Mission Santa Clara. Therefore, all that remains is to facilitate the removal of Carlos's wife and Regina, so that they can travel together to their destination. In order for this to happen, I beg and entrust Your Reverence to be so kind as to prescribe the measures you deem necessary so that the Reverend Fathers will swiftly turn over the Indian women and their children to the Lieutenant I have appointed. At each mission they pass through, they should be given sufficient provisions so as to make their trip as comfortable as possible. The Reverend Fathers from San Antonio should accept Regina and record her name in the mission register. Those from Santa Clara should do the same with Carlos and Agustín and their families.

The importance of carrying out this plan has convinced me that it should be acceptable to the zeal of Your Reverence and that I will be worthy of the assistance I propose for its success.

I always wish to please Your Reverence and I ask that Our Lord protect your life many years.

Monterrey, June 10, 1788

Your dearest and most faithful servant kisses the hand of Your Reverence,

Pedro Fages



California Mission Documents #79  
Lasuén's response written in the margins of the previous letter.

Copy of response

*Viva Señor*

*Señor Gobernador*

My dear Sir: Today I received your report, which deserves my respect, on the recent events at the nearby presidio. In your report Your Lordship informs me that the *Señor Comandante General* has sentenced the neophyte Indian Carlos, from Mission San Diego, and the neophyte Indian María Regina, from Mission San Gabriel, to perpetual banishment. And furthermore, Your Lordship has decided that Carlos and another Indian named Agustín Merino will serve their sentence at Mission Santa Clara and María Regina will serve her sentence at Mission San Antonio. Because Your Lordship has judged it appropriate for Carlos not to be separated from his wife, you have requested and entrusted me with prescribing the measures I deem necessary so that the woman and her children can be transferred to the place where her husband will be serving his sentence.

*Señor*: Since I neither wish to defy nor am I able to defy your authority and power with respect to your categorical decision, in the same vein I am not capable of refraining from being candid and sincere, which is my responsibility in matters for which my opinion is expected.

Your Lordship says that you are convinced that the order you have described was written so that



it would meet with my religious approval, but in all honesty I must confess that this is not so. The missions are not meant to be places where those banished from other missions can seek care and refuge. And, moreover, the missions should not be expected to prevent these people from repeating the same crimes for which they were banished. The missions were obviously intended for quite the opposite. No prudent missionary should shoulder such a huge responsibility, especially not with such wicked subjects.

The Indian Carlos has spent many years away from his wife and children in presidios, places designated for the punishment and confinement of unrepentant people. By an act of compassion on the part of the *Señor Comandante General*, he was returned to his land and to his mission and reunited with his wife and children. But instead of being grateful for the act of kindness, he immediately instigated the same unrest or similar ones that caused him to be exiled. Carlos's wife and children are not at fault, therefore, the missionaries cannot allow such a harsh punishment to be inflicted upon them. Only if they are convinced will the missionaries be able to try to see if, for the sake of her husband and their father, the wife and children would be receptive to making the sacrifice of being banished. I will attempt to make this happen, if it pleases Your Lordship, as well as anything else that Your Lordship sees fit to decide. It is true that I consider the objections I have expressed worthy of Your Lordship's attention, but it is also true that I make these objections with the same deference I always show and will continue to show with regard to your superior orders.

May the Lord Our God keep Your Lordship in His Holy Grace many years.

Mission San Carlos, June 15, 1788

Your dearest and most loyal servant and least of

your chaplains kisses the hand of Your Lordship,

Fr. Fermín Francisco de Lasuén

*Señor Comandante Inspector don Pedro Fages*



California Mission Documents #80

June 15, 1788

Fages to Lasuén concerning exiled Indians

Very Reverend Father Fray Fermín Francisco de Lasuén

Very Reverend Father President

My dear Sir:

I have carefully read Your Reverence's letter dated yesterday. After reflecting on the well-founded reasons you use to advise me of the difficulties you see in having exiled Indians moved from one mission to another and in having their families leave their homes to be with them as they serve their sentence, I have of course given up on the latter. And, even though the orders regarding their punishments are strictly spelled out, I will order that they be sent some place else on a temporary basis. Their wives can remain where they are.

I do not find sufficient reason based on her sex or unmarried state to change the location where the Indian Regina will be sent. As Your Reverence will see in the copy that I have attached, the order states the same thing. That is why I repeat my plea to Your Reverence and advise you to be so kind as to arrange to have the neophyte woman received at Mission San Antonio or at Mission Santa Clara, with the understanding that I am ordering that she be transported by a soldier.

I revere [you] and appreciate the kind words with which Your Reverence honors me as solely a consequence of your kindness. That is how I

understand it. I hope that opportunities will present themselves so that I can demonstrate to you my gratitude, reverence, and obedience.

May our Lord keep the life of Your Reverence many years.

Monterrey, June 15, 1788

Your very dearest and most loyal servant kisses the hand of Your Reverence,

Pedro Fages

Response:

*Viva Señor*

*Señor Gobernador*

My dear Sir: The gracious letter from Your Lordship, dated today, that I have just received, as well as Your Lordship's willingness to kindly enclose a copy of the *Señor Comandante General's* decision regarding the Indian woman Toypurina, have given my humble opinions more merit than they have on their own. I will make sure, *Señor*, never to forget to demonstrate the gratitude I feel.

I forgot to mention yesterday that I already thought the exact same thing that Your Lordship stated with regard to the Indian woman. She will be received with pleasure at whichever mission Your Lordship sends her and she will be duly attended to on the way to her destination.

Your Lordship's superior orders will be viewed as laws which add the pleasure and honor of pleasing you to my obligation to fulfill the orders.

May God keep Your Lordship

San Carlos, June 15, 1788

Your servant who kisses the hand of Your Lordship,

Fr. Fermín Francisco de Lasuén

*Señor Comandante Inspector don Pedro Fages*

ROSE MARIE BEEBE and ROBERT M. SENKEWICZ are professors at Santa Clara University. She is a professor of Spanish and he is a professor of history. They both received their Ph.D from Stanford University—she in Spanish and he in history. They are the translators, editors, and annotators of *Testimonios: Early California through the Eyes of Women: 1815–1848* (2006). They are the co-editors of *Lands of Promise and Despair: Chronicles of Early California, 1535–1846* (2001) as well as the translators, editors, and annotators of *The History of Alta California* by Antonio María Osio (1996), which received the Norman Neuerburg Award from the Historical Society of Southern California. They also jointly edited *Guide to the Manuscripts Concerning Baja California in the Collections of The Bancroft Library* (2002). Robert is the author of *Vigilantes in Gold Rush San Francisco* (1985). Rose Marie served as President of the *California Mission Studies Association* during 2001–2005.