

**Costansó's 1794  
Report on  
Strengthening New  
California's Presidios**

**Translation by Manuel P. Servin**

Originally published in the September 1970 issue of *The California Historical Society Quarterly*.  
This article was digitized by the History Office, Installation Support Unit, Camp San Luis Obispo.

2 May 2016

---

# Costanso's 1794 Report on Strengthening New California's Presidios

*Translated by* MANUEL P. SERVÍN

---

In the March issue of the *Quarterly* Don Miguel Costansó's contributions to the founding and the subsequent development of Spanish Alta California were emphatically but briefly presented in the article "Miguel Costansó: California's Forgotten Founder." Unfortunately such an article, no matter how well documented, had to be extremely limited and could not reveal the scope and depth of Costansó's ideas and measures for overcoming the problems and dangers confronting Spain's neglected province of Alta California. It is to make to the reader vitally aware of Costansó's talented ability not only to analyze Alta California's immediate and far-ranging problems and dangers but also to delineate sound, realistic solutions for them that the "Report of Don Miguel Costansó to the Viceroy, the Marqués de Branciforte, on the Plan for Strengthening the Presidios of New California, 1794,"<sup>1</sup> is now translated and published in English.

Costansó's "Report to the Viceroy" is a penetrating document. In it, the Engineer promptly recognizes the poor state of Alta California's defenses and the immediate measures necessary to remedy the situation. He, however, goes much deeper than this in analyzing the Province's problems. His evaluation of the English threat and his appreciation of the British talent for profitable and effective colonization are notable for their objectivity. Perhaps of greater significance is his extended explanatory recommendation that Alta California be populated by *gente de razón* (Hispanicized people of mixed blood) in order to stem English designs, to help civilize the Indians, and to encourage the economical and mercantile development of the Province.

Because Costansó's findings and recommendations were so enlightened and could have helped to stymie North American imperial-

---

MANUEL P. SERVÍN is professor of history at Arizona State University.

istic ambitions during the period of Manifest Destiny by making the Province truly Mexican, it is puzzling to note that this translator has not found an English translation of it. Moreover, references to it, both in monographs and general works on California history, are rare, except for those by Francis F. Guest, O.F.M., and H. H. Bancroft.<sup>2</sup> Yet manuscript copies of the "Report" can be found in the Bancroft Library at Berkeley and the Biblioteca Nacional at Madrid.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, this "Report to the Viceroy", along with Costansó's other reports on California, have been exquisitely transcribed and published by Don José Porrúa Turanzas in Volume V of the Colección Chimalistac, *Noticias y Documentos Acerca de las Californias, 1764-1795* (Madrid, 1959).

I am grateful to Porrúa Editorial, S.A., not only for publishing the "Report to Viceroy", but also allowing me to utilize his published version, which is an exact transcript of the manuscript at the Biblioteca Nacional at Madrid, for my translation. At the same time I am also thankful to Professor Donald C. Cutter who so graciously read and corrected both the translation of the "Report to the Viceroy" and the previous article, "Miguel Costansó: California's Forgotten Founder."<sup>4</sup>

REPORT OF DON MIGUEL COSTANSÓ TO THE VICEROY,  
THE MARQUÉS DE BRANCIFORTE, ON THE PLAN FOR  
STRENGTHENING THE PRESIDIOS OF NEW CALIFORNIA

1794

Most Excellent Sir:<sup>5</sup>

In your superior decree of last September 20th, Your Excellency was pleased to order me to report whatever thoughts I might have on the plans for strengthening the presidios of New California, sending me for this purpose the file of this project with the official communication of the 22nd of the same month.

According to the file, the King keeps four presidial companies in those settlements — namely, one in the port of San Diego, another along the Santa Barbara Channel, the remaining two in Monterey and in the port of San Francisco. In all they amount to 218 men, including the officers, sergeants, corporals, and one surgeon.

This small number of soldiers guard the vast territory extending from 32½ to 38 degrees north latitude, i.e., from the port of San Diego to that of San Francisco.<sup>6</sup> The coastline between these two points extends more than 200 leagues,<sup>7</sup> provides many bays, coves, and anchorages with good shelter and depth for vessels of all sizes.

In view of this simple description, Your Excellency's natural perceptiveness will

easily comprehend that the troops who presently occupy New California cannot carry out any other duties than those originally intended; namely, to contribute to reducing the numerous pagans of those regions to a civilized and Christian life by making them respect the religious functions and the office of the ministers of the Holy Gospel, to preserve peace among the new Christian vassals of our August Sovereign, and to maintain the greatest harmony between them and the pagan tribes who occupy those lands.

Consequently, whenever the strengthening of those presidios is discussed, the creation of a corps of troops for garrisoning and defending the presidios that are to be built must be considered imperative. There must be sent in advance workers who possess different skills pertaining to the construction of the buildings which have been planned and deemed necessary.

If the new construction which we are considering is to be funded, the cost that such an undertaking demands and the expenses that it will place upon New Spain's Royal Treasury, which is already burdened with so many urgent matters, must be understood.

A few regular batteries of eight cannons of twelve-pound shot, which will supposedly have breastworks made of dirt faced with adobe and which have been proposed for defending the entrances to the ports of San Diego, Monterey, and San Francisco, will cost, according to the prudent judgment of experienced and practical men, about eight thousand pesos each. It must be inferred from this that a great expenditure would devolve on the Royal Treasury from the building and construction of castles or forts of brick and mortar, notwithstanding how curtailed the costs may be thought — the respective buildings must billet the garrison, be storehouses for the safe-keeping of munitions, foodstuffs, and other related materials.

The construction of the above-stated batteries, which in my judgment are most necessary, will necessarily give rise to greater expenses than just those involved in construction because each presidio must be assigned a number of trained and experienced artillerymen who are considered necessary to man eight cannons. Concerning this point, if to Your Excellency the need for these batteries seems urgent, you could speak to Brigadier Don Pablo Sánchez<sup>8</sup> whose knowledge in such matters is very well known.

Up till now I have only touched upon those problems which are apparent at first sight and which place obstacles in carrying out the plan of strengthening the presidios of New California — the problems which I presently view as insurmountable because of the great expenditures that are currently being made by the Royal Treasury. The consideration of these problems, however, is not important at this time. What is important now is to find some means by which to avoid, without greater expenses, the dangers and evils that now threaten us and to become jointly more aware of the nearness of the foreigners already settled in the coasts of New California.

Actually, we have knowledge of the English nation's great activity, its boldness and audacity in carrying out and directing its enterprises, and its customary expertness in the sciences related to navigation and to the ability of making its

colonies prosperous through commerce. We know that they have shown great interest in the fur trade, an abundant product and enterprise along those coasts where they have discovered innumerable ports, bays, gulfs, and channels that everywhere make available shelter and anchorage to their ships.

We also know that catches of every type of fish are most abundant; that the climate is healthful; that the lands are suitable for crops of all types; that they are pleasant; that they are well forested with trees suitable for the construction of buildings and ships; and that the English have the means of gathering and transporting in their ships as great a number of people from Greater China as they wish in order to settle them in those new lands — whose ownership and discovery they claim — and to make them vassals of Great Britain.

Nor can we ignore that from that vast empire they will enjoy many benefits and advantages for carrying out their plans because its natives are generally industrious, attracted to commerce, and inclined to practicing the mechanical arts and farming.

From Canton the English will supply their colonists at lowest prices with wearing apparel, utensils, furniture, and other necessary things for living. The English trading posts, which have been established in that port by request of the British Admiralty and by self-interest and convenience, co-operate with everyone without any contributions or funds from government.

The first commercial expeditions to the Northwest Coast of this America were made from Macao and Canton.<sup>9</sup> After a brief period some London businessmen became directly interested in the fur trade, and formed a company under the auspices and protection of the government for highly capitalized enterprises as is evident and is well documented from the papers found in Captain Colnett's possession when he was apprehended in the port of Nutka<sup>10</sup> (with the ship he commanded) and sent to San Blas by Don José Martínez,<sup>11</sup> *piloto graduado*<sup>12</sup> of that [naval] department.

Everything is favorable to England's plans, and it will certainly know how to take advantage of such propitious circumstances. And, in this case, how great will be the wealth of these new colonies in a few years?

It has only been a few years since His Most Excellent Lordship, the Duque de Almodóvar,<sup>13</sup> discharging the post of Minister Plenipotentiary in St. Petersburg for the affairs of our Court informed the King by means of an official dispatch (a copy of which is before me) to His Most Excellent Lordship, Don Ricardo Wall,<sup>14</sup> former Minister of Foreign Affairs, of the Russian maritime expeditions. And, referring to one of the articles in his classified instructions, which concerned the discoveries made by that nation along the western coast of the American continent, he expressed himself in this manner:

In reference to the danger that we may fear from the Russian maritime expeditions to our America, it seems so remote at the present that it scarcely warrants consideration. I do not know whether one can truthfully say that Spaniards should fear the Russians on the coasts of America as much as the Russians should fear the Spaniards on those of Asia; that it is probably more likely that the Americans might come and conquer the Siberian coasts than for the Russians to be able to do the same in our America. . . . These voyages serve more for the advancement of geographical knowledge than for enlarging the empire.

In the centuries to come something else may occur. The revolutions that occur in the world are very odd. If those eastern provinces (Siberia and Kamchatka) should become civilized, change their system of laws and customs, and take advantage of their situation, great events which we should neither imagine nor fear today could occur.

The revolutions of this world are in fact very strange. And, although some may present foreboding or solid reasons for predicting future events, the political events are accurately predicted, especially those related to purpose and nature, but regarding the manner or accidental occurrences, predictions generally turn out to be most illusory.

His Lordship, the Duque de Almodóvar, was partly a witness to the events which he judged to be possible but only in a most remote manner and in the centuries to come. With a few more years of life an event that he could neither be expected nor foreseen could have been witnessed: he would have seen the coasts of America invaded by another nation much more dangerous to us than Russia, and, finally, he would have seen it attempt explorations whose object certainly was not limited to the advancement of geographical knowledge.

From the very first moment in which America was discovered by the Spaniards, it became an object of lust for European nations — all attempted to gain possession of some part of its beautiful territory, either on the continent or in the adjoining islands. The greatest and most beautiful part was occupied by the Crown of Spain by right of primacy. And, after more than two hundred and fifty years in which it has kept intact the immense regions which it acquired, they can properly be called the fountain of all wealth and prosperity. Would to God that our most remote posterity may see its sovereignty perpetuated in the glorious hands of our August Sovereigns.

In order to perpetuate this fortunate event, I think that it is of utmost importance that there now be utilized the most opportune and efficient means for preventing the dire consequences that will necessarily result from our omission or indifference in such an important matter and thereby promptly neutralize the attempts which the enemies of the Monarchy will naturally make in order to grab off whatever part they can of our best possessions, to which end it is to be feared the English settlements in California may be directed.

The measure of strengthening the presidios located in the ports of San Diego, Monterey, and San Francisco, besides being most important, as I pointed out before, is perhaps somewhat risky because each fortification is situated in an area devoid of resources and help and the garrison of which does not know upon whom to rely for aid due to the lack of population. It will therefore have to surrender, even after a most vigorous defence has been made, and it will necessarily be much more difficult and costlier to regain the lost fort and its surrounding territory.

Therefore, it is my judgment that the first thing that we should consider is populating the territory. Of what value are immense areas of territory to us if we do not populate them? Of nothing more than an insufferable load without the least expectancy of receiving any benefit.

There have been, and are being, spent immense sums on the propagation of the Catholic Faith among the pagan Indians of this continent. Missionaries, who

proclaimed to them the Holy Gospel, who have been sustained in their ministry by deference to the armed military, have been sent to them. This enterprise cannot be praised enough and is representative of the religious zeal of our August Monarchs. As new missions are established, new troops are raised and presidios erected. Nevertheless, the old foundations continue to exist, and the Royal Treasury is being eroded limitlessly. There are missions which are over one hundred years old, and we still see them staffed by Father-Ministers and by the same military escort, as in the beginning. But it has to be this way because in those reductions there are scarcely any other inhabitants except those native to the territory whose inconstancy must be continually observed so that the restless ones do not flee and disturb the tranquility of the land.

In order to avoid the problems and the setbacks that have developed and to have the missions prosper, to instruct the Indians in arts which are demanded by society, to civilize and to make them more useful vassals to the Monarchy, there are no means more efficacious than from the beginning of a new establishment to introduce among them *gente de razón* (as European Spaniards, the Creoles, and the people of mixed blood are called in order to differentiate them from the native Indians), provided they are hardworking and useful. This is the measure upon which the Indians of those vast lands must depend. The governors who are above the missionary priest and the captains of the presidios of the provinces of this New Spain have clamored, and are clamoring, for it—especially those of the Californias, Upper and Lower, or Old and New. It is known to me that Colonel Pedro Fages, who has been governor of the Californias and is now residing in this capital, has proposed this useful plan on various occasions and that by his efforts this Superior Government has sent some families of craftsmen to Monterey and San Diego.

In order to obtain these inexpressable benefits which are derived from this measure and which pertain to the moral, physical, political, and Christian aspects, it is not necessary that the Royal Treasury immediately pay costly expenses. It will be enough to send annually in the ships which sail from San Blas to those settlements some families who can conveniently travel by sea and to give each individual a naval ration for the voyage to ship's port to which the ships go, and from there another stipend until they are deposited at their final destination. To what has been said, it is necessary to add the corresponding subsidy of instruments and useful tools for his respective profession or occupation because such a measure is most helpful in attaining the principal goal.

The King gives a soldier arms for the defence of the nation. It is not less compatible with the pious intentions of His Majesty that for the growth of his kingdom the new settlers receive tools and farming equipment. By such a measure the Indians, aided by the paternal love and Christian zeal of His Majesty, will receive a training capable of making them as happy in temporal matters as in the spiritual; and, as time passes, those distant lands will be seen to prosper, benefitting the state. But without trades and industry, the Indians will never be able to be men and useful vassals.

Once Spanish or mixed-blood master craftsmen and colonists are stationed in the missions, they can be supported from the mission's temporalities by assigning to them a ration or food in proportion to the size of their families and by paying them in accordance to the effort they exert in teaching the Indians and in accordance to the things which they produce that were made by them or their apprentices. The economic system of the Reverend Father Missionaries and the fine method which they utilize in administering the temporalities in New California assures us beforehand of the success of these measures which they themselves desire and which they have longed for in their consultations where they sought the happiness of their spiritual sons.

Experience has demonstrated the fertility of the Spaniards and of the persons of mixed blood of this kingdom is much greater than that of the Indians. Perhaps this is so because when they are reduced to a civilized life or to a less wild existence, they procreate much less; or because when they intermarry with Spaniards or white persons, there is generally produced from the second or third generation some individuals who barely have a trace of Indian since they are reared among Spaniards and their language, habits, and customs no longer differ from ours.

For this reason it is evident that the number of Indians in New Spain decreases at the rate that the mixed-blood multiply. The same thing will happen in mission towns if families of farmers and craftsmen are placed there in the manner which has been proposed. The Indians will be civilized much faster. In a period of twenty to twenty-five years the missions will be towns where parishes can be established. They will cease being a burden to the Treasury, and their citizens will reach a point of contributing large sums to the Royal Treasury.

Another most useful measure for development of population in the Californias is the one which His Majesty dictated and prescribed over ten years ago in the royal order to the Governor and Captain General of the Philippine Islands by the classified mail of the Secretariat of the Indies. In it he states that the ship which sails from the port of Cavite for Acapulco, when making its landfall on the coast of New Spain must cast anchor at Monterey and disembark at that location all the discharged American soldiers from those islands who voluntarily wish to remain, either for the purpose of joining the presidial companies or of becoming settlers pursuing farming or some other profession. Tracts of land must be allotted to them, as must be assumed from the vastness and fertility of the territory. A very large fine was imposed by this sovereign decree on a ship's captain who willingly ignored the punctual fulfillment of the royal order. It was fulfilled for the first three or four years, but then, for some reasons which I do not know, it was not obeyed.

Nevertheless, the landfall at Monterey was not of less benefit to the Philippine Galleon than to the colony. The crew and passengers found there fresh food which is naturally longed for after a long voyage. The sick sailors, as a result of the good care, healthful climate, air, and water, got well in a few days, became accustomed to the area, and applied themselves to fishing and other labor pertaining to their occupation that benefitted the colony. The soldiers' and the citizens' families

obtained every type of clothing in exchange for a few gifts of food and other objects made in the province; the presidios, of many goods and arms which they lacked and which the ship did not urgently need.

It is not necessary to consider the great advantage which would have been derived by the colonies of New California, if this already indicated method of providing the means of increasing its population had not been interrupted. This method, in my judgment, is the most simple of all that can be thought up and the least burdensome on the Royal Treasury. When the last measure was decreed, no difficulty was experienced in its execution, and I do not believe that any exists today. For this reason I consider it most appropriate for Your Excellency's zeal and for His Majesty's benefit to decree again the prompt obedience to the royal order.

Above all, it would be of the greatest importance to initiate the navigation of the coasts of Sonora, New Galicia, the Californias, and in general of all the coasts of the South Sea that are part of this Viceroyalty. This would encourage its inhabitants to construct small ships, grant them franchises and freedom to trade among themselves since they have a mutual need for each other, since they are brothers and vassals of the same sovereign, and since navigation and commerce must be viewed as the poles around which the populating and the prosperity of any province must revolve. It pains one to think that in these vast North American coasts of the Pacific Ocean the King does not possess a single vassal who is the owner or proprietor of one sloop, schooner, or some other type of coastal vessel, especially since in previous years, when there was freedom of trade among New Spain, Guatemala, and Peru, there were various shipbuilders capable of carrying out maritime enterprises. A considerable number of sailors could be seen, and there was an abundant number of different towns which took an interest in that business. But the business interests of Cádiz — fearing that that shipping would diminish the demand of its products, when it could only have an opposite and generally favorable effect — managed to destroy that budding enterprise very early by repeatedly making unjust claims, and the vassals engaged in the nascent endeavor, who were forced to seek another type of livelihood for their families, began neglecting shipping as well as abandoning coastal life. These are the reasons why the depopulation of the coast is noticeable and why tremendous expenses have also been suffered by the Crown during the last twenty-five years when voyages and explorations have been undertaken in this continent where there is a total lack of sailors, naval yards, and supplies for the construction of ships — excepting lumber which is spontaneously produced in the forests in many places.

Maritime trade on the West Coast does not exist today. And as long as this inactivity continues to persist, the Royal Treasury will not receive any funds from it. But if shipping is promoted and franchises are granted, the demand for goods and merchandise from Europe and from the nation will increase immediately. This demand, it can be assumed, will contribute somewhat to the Royal Treasury. As time passes this trade will be able to contribute proportionately by means of the

taxes which will be imposed in accordance to its growth and to the profit it renders to those engaged in it.

The colonists of the Californias will be able to have a market for their materials and their manufactured goods. Fishing for sardine, salmon and tuna — which are extraordinarily abundant in those coasts and are unknown fishes in New Galicia<sup>15</sup> — will be an item of profit to them, if they learn to preserve and cure them with salt. The profit from ham and salted pork, from flour and legumes can be sold at San Blas and other torrid areas at better prices than those in effect today, the freight costs of those foods transported down to the coast from the interior of the continent are high and make those foods scarce. The silver and gold mines of Old California, which are barely worked because of the scarcity of workers, of foodstuffs, and all commercial products, will then be profitably worked for the benefit of the owners, of the public, and of the Royal Treasury.

The preservation of the Sovereign's proprietorship and ownership of these continental coasts is at present one of the most interesting and important matters. It was for this purpose that presidios were established in Upper California, that the port and shipyards were established in the Naval Department of San Blas,<sup>16</sup> and that ships were constructed to carry the settlers and the supplies which they annually need to the ports of Monterey and San Francisco. It was with the precise objective of obtaining accurate knowledge of those lands, of the condition and character of their coasts, ports, islands, and other circumstances, as well as of investigating the voyages and activities of foreigners who have always been eager to occupy them, that the King has at different times sent officials, pilots, builders, and crews of his Royal Fleet. These most costly expeditions have been made by the order of His Majesty so that there have been very few enterprises which have been more highly recommended or which have enjoyed greater diligence.

This is what I consider sufficient at this time in order to make these colonies flourish and to prepare them to defend themselves and later to depend on themselves. In case of war, however, other measures can be taken, such as the arming of ships stationed at San Blas and the shipping in them of the troops and forces needed to combat the ambitious pretensions of the Monarchy's enemies.

Finally, Most Excellent Sir, the solicitude of Your Excellency in promoting whatever is conducive for safeguarding those lands is most proper, and for this reason I have desired not to omit mentioning any measures which might have come to mind, relying upon my incomplete understanding, the knowledge acquired on my voyages and observations of the conditions that I have attentively seen and investigated. If my ideas should lack precision and accuracy, Your Excellency will correct them by relying on his well-known knowledge, being indulgent with me because what moved me to present them was my zeal for serving the best interest of His Majesty and the public.

May keep Your Excellency many years. Mexico. October 17, 1794.

Miguel Costansó

His Most Excellent Lordship  
The Marqués de Branciforte

## NOTES

1. "The Report to the Viceroy" at the Bancroft Library was entitled ["Informe de S. or D. Miguel Costansó al Exmo. S. or Virrey de Branciforte sobre el proyecto de fortificar los precidios de la N. California"]. The copy at the Biblioteca Nacional contains no title and is found in a bound volume with other manuscripts.

The title used in this text and translation is taken from *Noticias y documentos acerca de las Californias, 1764-1795* (Madrid: José Porrúa Turanzas, 1959).

2. See Florian Guest, "The Establishment of the Villa de Branciforte," *California Historical Society Quarterly*, XLI (March, 1962), 29-50, and H. H. Bancroft, *History of California* (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft & Company, 1884), I, 602-603.

3. The call number at the Bancroft Library is M-M 401; at the Biblioteca Nacional it is Documento 19, 266 of the *Papeles varios referentes a México*.

4. Since the article was written, I have learned that Costansó died in Mexico City on 27 September 1814. See Joachim Blake to Señor Secretario de Estado, Madrid, 3 June 1815, in Miguel Costansó, Expediente Personal 1,813, Archivo General Militar, Segovia. According to his service records, which give his age and the date in which it was written, Costansó was born in 1740 or 1741 in the city of Barcelona. See Guerra Moderna, Legajo 7272, Cuaderno 9, Archivo de Simancas.

Unfortunately two errors crept into my manuscript: 1) Portolá was never governor of Sinola as stated on page 3; and 2) it was not in September of 1793, as stated on page 14, but in 1794 that Viceroy "decreed that he receive recommendations for strengthening the presidios of Alta California."

5. The Viceroy, of New Spain, who in 1794 happened to be the Sicilian Marqués de Branciforte, was always addressed as Excelentísimo Señor (Most Excellent Sir).

The Marqués de Branciforte was the brother-in-law of Manuel Godoy. His Christian name was Don Miguel de la Grúa y Talamanca. He was Viceroy of New Spain from July 12, 1794, to May 31, 1798, and is known for his love of adulation and for enriching himself. Lázaro Lamadrid Jiménez, O.F.M., *El Alavés Fray Fermín Francisco de Lasuén, O.F.M. (1736-1803)* (Alava: Diputación Floral de Alava, 1963), I, 347, and II, 206; José Bravo Ugarte, *Historia de México* (México: Jus, 1941), Tomo Segundo, 106; Herbert Ingram Priestly, *José de Gálvez: Visitor-General of New Spain, 1765-1771* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1916), p. 389.

The King of Spain was Charles IV (1788-1808) whose reign was distinguished by his weakness, his wife's infidelity, and the administrative corruption of the officialdom — all of which led to Napoleon Bonaparte's takeover of Spain and consequently to the independence of Mexico from the mother country.

6. Costansó's location for both San Diego and San Francisco Bays are very accurate. See Rand McNally, *The International Atlas* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1969), I, 179.

7. A league in Spanish California was the equivalent of 2.6 miles.

8. I was unable to find any data on Brigadier Pablo Sánchez except that he, Costansó, and Fidalgo wrote a report on the sending of supplies to California. It is entitled "Informe sobre los auxilios que se propone enviar a California, 1795." See *Noticias y documentos acerca de las Californias*, p. 239.

9. For a brief description of the emergence of English trade in the Northwest see Manuel Servín, "The Act of Sovereignty in the Age of Discovery" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1959), pp. 146-154.

10. "Notka" of "Nutca" is the Spanish equivalent for Nootka in English. Nootka Island, located about two-thirds up the western coast of Vancouver Island, lies at 49 degrees 32 minutes North Latitude and 126 degrees 42 minutes West Longitude. See Rand McNally, *The International Atlas*, I, 151.

11. For the Nootka Controversy that emerged in 1789 when Martínez seized the British ships anchored at Nootka and dispatched Colnett in chains to Mexico City see Manuel P. Servín, "The Act of Sovereignty in the Age of Discovery," pp. 154-176, and William R. Manning, *The Nootka Sound Controversy* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1905).

12. It is difficult to ascertain what rank a *piloto graduado* held. According to the *Ordenanzas de su Magestad para el Gobierno Militar Político, y Económico de su Armada Naval: Primera Parte que contiene los Assuntos pertenecientes al Cuerpo General de la Armada* (Madrid: Juan de Zúñiga, 1748), p. 161, there were only three types of *pilotos de número* or pilots assigned to each department: first, second, and assistant pilots. The *Ordenanza* does not mention *pilotos graduados*. But it is plausible that a *piloto graduado* was a commissioned officer acting as a *piloto* (see *Nuevo Diccionario Ilustrado de la Lengua Española* [Barcelona: Editorial Ramón Sopena, S.A., 1968], p. 535) or a *piloto* temporarily assigned to a naval department (see *Ordenanzas*, p. 165).

13. I believe that this is Pedro Jiménez de Góngora, Duque de Almodóvar del Rfo, who was born at the beginning of the eighteenth century and died in Madrid in 1794. He represented Spain in the Courts of Russia, Portugal, and England. After returning to the Spanish Court, he dedicated himself to literary pursuits publishing *La Década Espistolaria sobre el estado de la literatura en Francia* in 1781. In 1792 he was elected as president of the Royal Spanish Academy of History. *Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada, Europeo-Americana* (Madrid-Barcelona: Espasa-Calpe, S.A.), IV, 851; XXVIII, 2788.

14. Ricardo Wall, who was Irish descent, was born in Nantes, France (date unknown), and died in Granada in 1778. He began his career in France as an officer in the Navy, but then, influenced by Cardinal Alberoni, joined the Spanish Navy in 1718. He distinguished himself in Sicily as a naval officer, but later entered the Spanish Army where he rose to the rank of lieutenant general. He was highly esteemed by both Ferdinand VI and Charles III where he was respectively Secretary of State, (1754-1759) under the former and Secretary of War (1759-1763) under the latter. Although he was a definite participant in signing of the Family

Compact, he tried to maintain a distance with the French. In 1763 after the Treaty of Paris was signed, he retired. *Diccionario de Historia de España* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1952), II, 1458.

15. Nueva Galicia, or as it was technically known "Reino de Nueva Galicia, was a province of New Spain that today would include the present-day status of Aguascalientes, Jalisco, a great portion of the state of Zacatecas, and considerable territory of the states of Durango and San Luis Potosí. *Enciclopedia Universal*, XXXVIII, 1443.

16. For the establishment of the Naval Department of San Blas see Enrique Cárdenas de la Peña, *San Blas de Nayarit* (2 vols.; México: Secretaría de Marina, 1968), and Michael E. Thurman, *The Naval Department of San Blas* (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1967).