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Fray Francisco Hidalgo, Pioneer Missionary in Texas

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FRAY FRANCISCO HIDALGO, PIONEER
MISSIONARY IN TEXAS

by
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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of
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Master of Arts

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Arnold Andrew Wurzel was born in La Crosse, Wisconsin, August 8, 1916.

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The author began his graduate studies at Loyola University in June, 1949.
PREFACE

It is the purpose of this thesis to present a biographical study of Fray Francisco Hidalgo in order to evaluate his role in the Spanish occupation and settlement of Texas. Although overshadowed by such illustrious missionaries as Damián Massanet and Antonio Margil de Jesús, Hidalgo, nevertheless, deserves an honored place at their side for almost singlehandedly bringing about the Spanish reoccupation of east Texas in 1716.

Since a considerable amount of the sources used in the preparation of this study were in Spanish, the translations are the author's own unless the name of the translator is given. To avoid confusion to the reader in terminology, the author uses the words "Tejas" and "Hasinai" to refer to the Indians of east Texas, and the word "Texas" to mean in general the territory beyond the Río Grande as far as Louisiana.

The author wishes to express his sincere appreciation for the helpfulness and courtesies extended to him by the librarians of the San Antonio Public Library and the Texas University Library.
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CHAPTER I
ARRIVAL IN NEW SPAIN

The birthplace of Francisco Hidalgo, as well as his parentage, childhood years, and the circumstances leading to his vocation in the Order of Friars Minor, have not yet been brought to light. The year of his birth can be established as 1659, probably in Spain, during the reign of Philip IV when the unwieldy Spanish Empire was beginning to show definite signs of crumbling.

Francisco must have been a mere boy when he sought entrance into the Franciscan Order of the province of Los Angeles, for he is said to have taken the habit at the age of fifteen.1 Destined for the priesthood, he pursued his studies as a corista or choir brother until ordination, when he secured the double title of Padre and Predicador. Barely twenty-three years of age, the holy oils still moist on his fingers, glowing with fervor, bounding in enthusiasm, possessing a truly apostolic heart, he yearned to do great things for God, however difficult, hazardous,

1 Juan Domingo Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica y Apostólica del Colegio de Propaganda Fide de la Santa Cruz de Querétaro en la Nueva España, Segunda Parte, Mexico, 1792, 206.
or challenging they might be. And the opportunity was not long in presenting itself to his generous heart.

For at this very time there was in Spain a Franciscan father named Fray Antonio Linaz de Jesus Maria who had arrived from Mexico to attend the General Chapter of the Order, which was being held in Toledo in 1682. Between meetings of the Chapter he discussed at length with the Superior General his plan of sending special groups of twelve friars, like the twelve Apostles, to preach the Gospel to the many Indians of Mexico who were still in paganism. The Father General gave his approval to the idea but suggested the more practical plan of establishing a college of apostolic missionaries in Mexico itself, located in a place convenient to the mission area, where the missionaries could live, recuperate, train, and recruit other missionaries. Such a foundation, however, required both royal and papal sanction. The youthful King Charles II, upon the recommendation of the Council of the Indies, issued a cédula on April 18, 1682 authorizing Fray Antonio Linaz to make the establishment. The city of Queretaro, about one hundred and fifty miles northwest of Mexico City, was selected as a suitable site for the Apostolic College, so the General ordered the Mexican province of Michoacán to turn over to Linaz its convent of Santa Cruz in that city for his use. Papal

approval to make the foundation came from Pope Innocent XI three weeks later. The Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith bestowed on Linaz the title of Prefect of all the missions in the Indies.³ Father Linaz was now confronted with the task of recruiting the twenty-four priests and six lay brothers needed to make the foundation. He immediately began a tour of all the convents in each of the provinces of the Franciscan Order in Spain, explaining his mission and seeking for volunteers. Among those who answered his appeal from the province of Los Angeles was the Padre Predicador Fray Francisco Hidalgo.

At the end of eight months Linaz had recruited a total of twenty-one missionaries and five lay brothers from among the Franciscan houses in Spain. As the members of his band hastened to the point of embarkation from all parts of the country in order to be on time for the summer sailing of the royal fleet, they found to their dismay that the date of departure was being constantly postponed. As the months dragged by, most members of the party returned to their respective convents.⁴ It was while waiting at the convent of San Antonio in Seville that Fray Francisco Hidalgo met and formed a lasting friendship with another young missionary named Fray Francisco Casañas, who had been recruited

³ Ibid., 18-19.
⁴ Isidro Felis de Espirosa, Chronica Apostolica y Seraphica de todos los Colegios de Propaganda Fide de esta Nueva-Espana, de Missioneros Franciscanos Observantes, Parte Primera, Mexico, 1745, 42.
from distant Barcelona. Fray Casañas, too, was to labor among the Tejas Indians and to obtain a martyr's crown in New Mexico by being cruelly put to death by Apaches in 1696, thus becoming the proto-martyr of the Propaganda Fide in North America. The two friends traveled together from Seville to the embarkation point at Cádiz.

After a delay of some eight months, the departure of the royal fleet was announced for March 4, 1683, which that year fell on Ash Wednesday. The assembled missionaries, who, because of deaths, now numbered only nineteen priests and four lay brothers, spent their last few days in port preaching a pre-Lenten mission to the townspeople and sailors. So fruitful was this mission and "so copious was the catch of the spiritual net that all the missionaries in the confessional were not sufficient to bring it in." Then, in groups of twos and threes the missionaries were distributed among the ten vessels "más o menos" which comprised the fleet, content to accept the mean accommodations left to them an non-revenue passengers. Nine of this valiant band were destined to labor in the mission fields of Texas. They were (1) Fray Francisco Estévez, (2) Fray Miguel de Fontecuberta, (3) Fray Antonio Casañas, (4) Fray Antonio Margil de Jesús, (5) Fray Francisco Hidalgo, (6) Fray Joseph Dies, (7) Fray Antonio Perea, (8)

5 Mattie Austin Hatcher, "Descriptions of the Tejas or Asinai Indians, 1691-1722," SHQ, Austin, Texas, XXX, January, 1927, footnote on 207.
6 Espinosa, Chronica Apostólica, 45.
Fray Damián Massanet, and (9) Fray Antonio Bordoy. 7

The crossing lasted ninety-three days. 8 A saintly patience was demanded of the friars to endure its tedium, dangers, (the fleet narrowly escaped capture first by pirates and then by English corsairs) and discomforts. Fray Hidalgo made it his concern to look after the salvation of the passengers and crew on his ship, "giving consolation to some and hearing the confessions of others." 9

On May 30, 1683 the fleet caught sight of the castle of San Juan de Ulúa which guarded the entrance to the port at Vera Cruz. A small boat was seen making its way out to the fleet, evidently bearing important news. In shocked amazement the arrivals heard the frightful story of the sacking of Vera Cruz by pirates, who, at that very moment were making good their escape. Only when they got on shore did the friars realize the true extent of the damage left in the wake of the piratical attack. For, by a clever ruse eight hundred pirates had secretly entered the port in two captured Spanish vessels, had completely surprised the sleeping town at midnight, and had then set about systematically plundering the city, after looking up most of its six thousand inhabitants in the parish church for three days and nights. In addition

7 Castañeda, Catholic Heritage in Texas, III, 19.
8 Espinosa, Crónica Apostólica, 46.
9 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 207.
to the booty taken, the buccaneers had removed fifteen hundred leading citizens to the nearby island of Sacrificios, demanding for them a ransom of one hundred and fifty thousand pesos. During the ten days or more that the pirates held the city in their power, they amassed close to a million pesos in spoils, caused damages of several more millions, brought death to three hundred inhabitants, and reduced many more to beggary.10

The missionaries gave what aid they could to the stricken populace, tending the sick, binding the wounds of the injured and maimed, and giving a more decent burial to the dead. After several days spent in these works of charity, Fray Antonio Linaz, observing that the local food supply was already "reduced to some spoiled beans and a few black biscuits,"11 ordered his little band of missionaries to set out by twos for Querétaro, about one hundred and fifty leagues12 distant in the mountains northwest of Vera Cruz. They were enjoined to travel on foot "carrying no more baggage than their walking stick and breviary."13 Since many of the small towns through which they must pass were without resident priests, Fray Linaz instructed his friars to give missions in them and so earn their food and lodging as they went

11 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 207.
12 The average Spanish land league was about two miles.
13 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 207.
along. They were all to meet again at the city of Puebla de los Angeles, some sixty leagues away, for a brief rest.

Their usual procedure, when coming to a town, was to enter it singing the Litany of the Blessed Virgin while making their way through the streets of the town until they arrived at the church. By this time a crowd had gathered to which they discoursed. Afterwards they heard confessions and gave out Holy Communion. In the town of San Lorenzo, completely populated by Negroes, they preached a very successful mission. Following their stop at Puebla, they set out on the second stage of their journey to the Imperial City of Mexico, whence they completed the last lap to Querétaro, giving their final mission in the nearby town of San Juan del Río. Two and one-half months after leaving Vera Cruz, the tired little band of missionaries took solemn possession of their Colegio de la Santa Cruz in Querétaro on the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, August 15, 1683.

The religious immediately set about putting things in order for their occupancy and settling down to live once more the strict convent life to which they had pledged themselves, after almost half a year of traveling to reach their destination. This was to be a convent of the regular observance, whose constitution

14 Espinosa, Chrónica Apostólica, 49.
15 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 207.
had been laid down by the papal bull Sacrosancti Apostolatus of May 8, 1682. The rule must be strictly observed, especially in regard to poverty. At least two hours a day must be set aside for mental prayer. All were required to be present for the daily recitation of the Divine Office in choir. Three hours in the morning and one hour in the afternoon were to be devoted to lectures and conferences on Indian languages and on the manner of converting, teaching catechism, and instructing converts. The superior of the convent, called the Father Guardian, could admit any friar, cleric, or lay brother from any province of the Order, to the Colegio with the consent of the Discretorios, or house council, consisting of four discretos, or councilors. He could send out missionaries by twos or in larger numbers, whenever and wherever needed. If a new mission was founded, the Colegio might keep possession of it only so long as it should please the local Ordinary. No matter how wealthy a mission might become, the friars must still continue to live on alms by begging. Conduct becoming a missionary entailed expulsion from the Colegio and a return of the offender to his home province, which had to accept him.

Fray Hidalgo quickly conformed to the routine of the Colegio, giving "special edification to his companions . . . in the strict practice of the Recoletos . . . and in his exact conformity to the Estatutos Apostólicos, as well as his punctuality in the day and night assistance at choir, at prayer, in silence, and in other voluntary and spiritual exercises." Thus he prepared himself seriously for whatever missionary work would be assigned to him.

17 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 208.
CHAPTER II

THE PULL OF THE NORTH

Before the end of the year 1683 Fray Francisco Hidalgo was assigned to accompany a group of religious from the Colegio headed by its founder, Fray Antonio Linaz, to preach an important mission in Mexico City. Here the friars labored tirelessly giving sermons to the people not only in the churches but also in the streets and public plazas. From here Hidalgo was sent with four companions to give missions in the diocese of Puebla. In the course of their missionary journey they reached Atlixco, situated at the entrance to the "hot land" on the slope of the volcano Popocatepetl. At this point the zealous friars seemed to have been contemplating the idea of crossing the cordillera into la tierra calientes when obedience summoned them back to their Colegio.1 Hidalgo spent almost the entire next year of 1684 in similar apostolic travels, endeavoring constantly to instill in his listeners the fundamental practice of frequenting the Sacraments. He never ceased also to propagate among them his two favorite devotions,

1 The sole authority, unless otherwise noted, for this and subsequent facts relating to Fray Hidalgo's missionary journeys in Mexico between 1683 and 1690 is Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 208-213.
the Way of the Cross and the Rosary.

During Lent of the following year Hidalgo was again numbered among the group of preachers chosen by Father Linaz to give a mission in the well-populated and justly celebrated city of Puebla de los Angeles. This enterprise was undertaken at the personal invitation of Bishop Don Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, who held those men of God in high esteem. Besides conferring upon them all the authority and faculties needed for their work, he himself publicized the mission and delivered the opening sermon in his cathedral. From then on the missionaries took over the pulpit by turns in the cathedral, and in the convents, plazas, and streets of the city. Arricivita, the chronicler, quaintly records the success of this mission as follows: "So great was the spiritual noise of this conversion that it was heard throughout the kingdom, as profane clothes were abandoned, stolen objects returned, usuries of great amounts restored, old enemies reconciled, dishonorable and illicit relationships abandoned."2 Multitudes made general confessions and public penances were performed everywhere.

Before returning to the Colegio again, Linaz divided his co-workers into pairs, bidding them to preach along the road home. Hidalgo and his partner, Fray Escaray, delivered sermons in numerous towns in the archdiocese of Mexico City, until reaching the

2 Ibid., 208.
village of San Juan del Rio, in the vicinity of Querétaro, where Linaz joined them. Here, during the octave of the feast of Corpus Christi, the three preachers gave a most successful mission.

Shortly after, Hidalgo was assigned a new partner, Fray Estévez, with whom he set out once more toward Mexico City, stopping to preach the word of God especially in the villages of Tlaxcalilla, Huichapán, and Lerma, thus bringing them to within twenty leagues of the capital. A few miles west of Lerma, in the town of Toluca, located in a picturesque valley at the foot of the Toluca Sierra, Estévez left Hidalgo, who was then joined by Fray Pedro Medina. Together they continued on their missionary circuit, giving sermons at Calimaya, Malinalco, and other towns, even stopping off at workshops and haciendas in order to preach to the laborers. At times the people would follow the padres along the road from place to place to hear their words and to confess their sins to them as they walked. After this lengthy and exhausting journey Fray Hidalgo retired to the Colegio where he offered the fruits of his mission to God and set about renewing his spirit by the faithful practice of the convent rule.

February of the year 1686 saw Fathers Hidalgo and Medina on another missionary circuit, this time west of Querétaro. They began their instructions at San Miguel el Grande where the crowds were so great that they had to preach and confess for twenty days. From here they proceeded to San Juan de la Vega and other towns until reaching Apaseo. Entire families left their houses to hear
the sermons, while many persons came from great distances to make their confession and the padres were often awakened during the night to give them this consolation. Excessive fatigue, intensified by loss of sleep, so wore down Hidalgo's otherwise robust health that he fell gravely ill and was forced to return to the Colegio in order to regain his strength.

After his recovery Hidalgo was again chosen to be the missionary companion of Fray Antonio Escaray. At the urgent request of the bishop of Guadalajara, they were assigned to preach in the towns of that diocese, which were farther west and north of Querétaro than they had ever gone before. On the way, the two friars devised a system of strategy for their work which proved to be highly effective. Escaray would do the preaching and exhorting, and Hidalgo, with marvelous clarity, would make explanations of the principal mysteries of the faith, the Commandments of God and of the Church, and the Sacraments, especially Penance. When Escaray had finished his sermon, Hidalgo would stand on the steps of the sanctuary holding a crucifix. With stories and examples he would emphasize the main points of the sermon, and, brandishing the crucifix, he would move the audience to such fervent acts of contrition that many shed tears openly.

Their first mission was given at the chartered city of Santa María de los Lagos, fifty leagues northwest of Querétaro. With special faculties from the bishop they were here able to perform and rectify a great number of marriages. After preaching at
the celebrated sanctuary of Nuestra Señora de San Juan, crowds followed the missionaries along the roads in order to confess and make their Easter duty. Passing through the hacienda of Mata they eventually reached the tunnelled city of Aguascalientes famed for its hot mineral springs and baths as well as for its good climate, where Father Estévez joined them. The trio then proceeded still farther northward across the burning desert until arriving at the mining town of Zacatecas, picturesquely built on a series of hills. Here they were so enthusiastically received that they found it almost impossible to refuse the townspeople's request for the establishment of another Colegio Apostólico in their city. A crowd of more than three thousand persons followed the missionaries out of the town as they made their way to the Reales de Minas\(^3\) of Veta and Pánuco, thus penetrating deep into the mining region of northeastern Mexico.

To their great joy, they encountered a considerable number of pagan Indians in this area who had not as yet received the message of the gospel. The three zealous Franciscans immediately determined to set about converting them, since this, after all, was the principal object of the foundation of the Apostolic College in Querétaro. With this purpose in mind, they asked and obtained from the bishop of Guadalajara, in whose territory the pagans were located, the necessary permission to undertake this conversion, as

\(^3\) Real de minas: a town having silver mines in its vicinity.
required by the constitution of the Colegio.

All the necessary arrangements having been completed, Hidalgo and his two companions, Fathers Escaray and Estévez, set out from Querétaro in 1688 to walk the one hundred and seventy leagues directly north along the central plateau, which would bring them to the former Aztec settlement of Saltillo. Missions were preached in the towns they passed along the way. By the time they reached Saltillo, Father Escaray was so sick that he could not continue and had to be left behind.4 Trusting in divine providence the remaining two friars pushed on fifty leagues northwest to Monclova where they presented their credentials to the ecclesiastical and secular authorities. But "they had no effect whatsoever, nor did they receive the encouragement they were hoping for. This was a major victory for the forces of evil ... ".5 It was indeed a cruel blow to the apostolic seal of the two Franciscans to be so rebuffed in their designs after having journeyed so far.

With the road to the north firmly closed and their plans frustrated, the disappointed padres had recourse to prayer. Their prayers were answered in the form of a visit from three Tlaxcalteca Indians who had attended their mission in Saltillo and who had

4 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 211. Hubert H. Bancroft is possibly in error here for he states in his History of Texas and the North Mexican States, I, San Francisco, 1890, 377 that Escaray also came to Monclova at this time.

5 Ibid.
been much impressed by the virtues and doctrine of the missionaries. To them, the Indians made the following proposition:

Dear Father Missionaries, . . . we have taken notice of your sadness and inscrutability. Do not grieve further because we will bring you to a place called Boca de Leones, where we intend to start a pueblo. If the place suits you, we, even though we are poor, will solicit infidels to convert and we shall consider ourselves very happy to serve you in your mission and to accompany you on the way.

Considering this a heaven-sent opportunity, the two priests joyfully set out accompanied by the Indians. They found the location luxuriant and pleasant, with plenty of water, but no infidels. The Indians told the priests not to be discouraged as the heathen land was only ten leagues distant, and there would surely be some there. Leaving them to wait in a little hut, the three Tlaxcaltecas went out in search of infidels, returning after a few days, with some Alasapa Indians, several fugitive Christian Indians, and some pagans from different tribes. The missionaries received them with open arms and immediately set about erecting a crude church which they named Nuestra Señora de los Dolores in honor of Our Lady of Sorrows. They also built another hut to serve as their own shelter in which they taught catechism to the pagans and made further explanations of the faith to the apostates.

One day the Alasapa Indians informed the missionaries of some very heavy rocks which they had found in a hill near the mission. When assays were made of the rocks, they were found to be

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6 Ibid.
silver-bearing. Hidalgo blessed the mine and called it La Mina de San Francisco de Asís, from which a very rich treasure of silver was subsequently taken. From that time on, the place was called Real de Minas de Boca de Leones. But the Franciscans, more interested in finding pagans than silver, roamed the forests and explored the land for a considerable distance around the mission to prepare the way for further foundations by the priests of the Colegio. They eventually succeeded in gathering a few more pagan Indians at the mission, where they instructed them and gave them work whereby they could earn a livelihood for themselves and their dependents. Twenty-nine families of Tlaxcalteca Indians had already been gathered into a pueblo by the time Spanish fortune-hunters and merchants, who had heard of the silver strike, began to pour into the area. Soon the fame of the wealth of the mines discovered in that district had turned the little mission into a great colony.

Just when the mission was prospering, the Franciscans received orders to entrust its care to the local ordinary. This they humbly did, although they quite reasonably felt that their neophytes were far from being so rooted in the knowledge and practice of the Catholic faith as to be able to persevere in their new way of life without the special care and watchfulness of the understanding missionaries. So when the curate arrived who had been sent by the bishop to take over the mission, the Alasapa Indians and other pagans, "not knowing the voice of their new shepherd,
ran away, and like wandering sheep, were dispersed through the forests seeking their former dwelling places." 7

Thus, suddenly and unexpectedly, did Estévez and Hidalgo find themselves without a mission and far away from their home convent at Querétaro. They had spent two happy years working among the pagan Indians of Boca de Leones and they longed to go still farther north, even beyond the Río Grande, in search of more pagan lands to conquer. They had indeed felt the pull of the north.

7 Ibid., 213.
CHAPTER III

ACROSS THE RIO GRANDE

More momentous things, however, were happening in New Spain in the year 1689 than the loss of a prospering mission to two obscure missionaries. Decisions of great consequence were being made in the vice-regal city of Mexico and the air of complacency that had pervaded the capitol was giving way to a feeling of apprehension and urgency. The cause of these unusual phenomena was the French. News had reached Mexico of the landing of La Salle in 1685 at La Bahía del Espíritu Santo, now Matagorda Bay, and the erection of a French fort in its vicinity. This was a direct violation of Spanish territorial claims over Texas. Immediately following the receipt of this information, the viceroy sent out expeditions by both land and sea to discover the location of the intruders and to drive them out. No trace of the settlement could be found until four years later when searchers stumbled across what was left of the fort after the Indians had gotten through with it. Satisfied that the French threat to Spanish control of the gulf region had been effectively removed, Alonso de León, governor of Coahuila and leader of the searching party, after making some smaller explorations on the way, returned to Mexico and reported what he had found.
The viceroy, however, was not so easily satisfied. It was true that the French fort was gone, but what was to prevent the French from making another and stronger attempt in the future? Surely the Indians could not be relied upon to destroy all their forts. He, therefore, "realized the error committed by De León in leaving the new country unprotected and his own blame for not having given him orders to establish a settlement. To repair this he issued new orders, to the same De León, to repeat the expedition."

Since this new entrada beyond the Río Grande del Norte was committed to the task of settling and holding the land, the civil authorities enlisted the aid of the missionaries from the Colegio Apostólico of Querétaro. The logical man to represent the friars during the planning stages of the expedition was Fray Damián Massanet, who had accompanied De León in 1689. When asked by the viceroy at a general meeting of the principals of the expedition, concerning the number of missionaries he planned to take along, he replied:

I would take along three priests for the Tejas, myself being the fourth, besides two for the mission of San Salvador, which is on the way, making a total of six priests to be sent by the college; and in the event of the Tejas receiving the faith, then the college should send whatever priests would be required.  


2 "Letter of Don Damián Massanet to Don Carlos de Siguienza Relative to the Discovery of the Bay of Espíritu Santo," trans. Lilia M. Gasías, SHQ. II, April, 1899, 294.
Among the five priests named to accompany Massanet were the two friends of pre-sailing days in Seville, Francisco Casañas and Francisco Hidalgo, who had returned to the Colegio after giving up Mission Dolores at Boca de Leones.

It had been determined that the expedition would get under way after Christmas of 1689. The missionaries were to await the arrival of Captain Francisco Martínez and his supply train of "twenty mules laden with wine, wax, and so on, also clothing for distribution among the Indians and six loads of tobacco."\(^3\) Besides the missionaries, there were one hundred and ten men in the company.\(^4\) When the party reached the mission of Santiago de la Caldera,\(^5\) which Massanet had founded two years before, Fathers Hidalgo and Perea stayed behind to act as ministers there. Good religious that he was, this act of obedience on Hidalgo's part must not have been easy for one so desirous as he for the conversion of the Indians beyond the Río Grande. Nevertheless, he carried out his duties of instructing the natives morning and afternoon, teaching them habits of work and decent living, his greatest solace in disappointment being prayer and the spiritual exercises.

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3 Ibid., 296.

4 Morfi, History of Texas, Part One, 152.

5 Massanet called it San Salvador. There seems to be a certain amount of confusion surrounding the name of this mission because of its proximity to the mission of Caldera itself. Castaneda seems to accept Dunn's explanation that San Salvador was an offshoot of Massanet's old mission of Caldera.
Meanwhile, Governor Alonso de León and his party crossed the Río Grande and proceeded to the country of the Hasinai or Tejas Indians, which they reached about the middle of May, 1690. Among these apparently friendly Indians the mission of San Francisco de los Tejas was established. First a temporary chapel was built and by the end of June a church and living-quarters for the padres had been erected on a suitable site. Massanet appointed Father Miguel Fontecuberta as superior of the mission, and then returned to Mexico.

The missionaries were so encouraged by the docility of the Indians in receiving instruction that Casañas founded a second mission among them entitled Jesús, María, y Joseph, building the house and chapel with his own hands. Then disaster struck in the form of a small-pox epidemic which swept through the villages and brought death to many. The padres tended the sick and baptized most of the dying. Fray Fontecuberta himself contracted the disease, which took his life on February 5, 1691.

6 Variously spelled Asinai, Asinais, Assinai, and Assinay. For the sake of uniformity, Bolton's spelling is followed throughout this thesis. The Hasinai were a compact group of tribes living in the upper Neches and Angelina River valleys. Cf. Herbert E. Bolton, "The Native Tribes About the East Texas Missions," SHQ, XI, April, 1908, 249.


8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.
While the missionaries were struggling to maintain themselves in their far-flung mission, the Junta General, meeting in Mexico City in 1690, determined that another expedition to Texas should be made immediately, under the command of Don Domingo Terán de los Ríos, newly appointed governor of Coahuila and Texas. The avowed purpose of this entrada was to establish no less than eight missions in east Texas. In this move can be detected the contagious enthusiasm and persuasive arguments of the inveterate Damián Massanet because he "depicted the success of missions among the Asinais in such sanguine colors."10

On this occasion Hidalgo was definitely informed by his superiors that he was to make the entrada and so he set about in all haste to combine the two missions of San Salvador and Caldera preparatory to handing them over to the care of the religious of Coahuila who belonged to the province of Jalisco.11 Eight other priests were named for the expedition, four Observantine and four Discalced Franciscans.12 Massanet was appointed ecclesiastical commissary of the group. Don Francisco Martínez was again given

10 Ibid., 479.

11 Espinosa, Crónica Apostólica, 412. Arricivita states that the missions were handed over to the priests of the province of Guadalajara. Cf. Crónica Seráfica, 213.

12 Ibid. Shea seems to be in error on this point for he states that besides Massanet and Hidalgo there were two others from the convent at Querétaro, and only two Observantine and two Discalced Franciscans, which makes a total of eight. Actually there were ten on the expedition.
According to Hidalgo's account, the carrying out of this undertaking was delayed for some time because "it was only in the month of June, 1691, that Governor Terán arrived at Coahuila with a company of soldiers and nine priests who were destined for the different missions which were to be founded in that land . . . ." One can imagine how joyfully Hidalgo united himself to that valiant band of missionaries and set his face toward the north, beyond the Río Grande into Texas. This was what he had hoped for and prayed for. He was finally embarked on the great adventure of his life.

The expeditionary force left Coahuila and advanced into Texas as far as the Río de San Marcos where the main body halted and Governor Terán "sent off Captain Don Francisco Martínez with part of the troops to the Bay of Espíritu Santo with the express order to stay in that port until the ship would arrive with the sea forces which His Excellency was sending." After several days of waiting and seeing no sign of any ship arriving, the captain returned to the main body of the expedition. The governor,


14 Ibid.
commanded him to return once more to the Bay of Espíritu Santo and under no circumstances was he to leave until the ship arrived.

Meanwhile, precious time was being lost and the religious were becoming impatient at the delays. Besides, the rainy season was approaching which meant swollen rivers and almost impassable roads. Unable to wait any longer, the priests went on ahead escorted by a few soldiers and reached the first mission of San Francisco de los Tejas on August 2, 1691. Here they found Father Antonio Bordoy in charge and learned that Casañas had built another mission, and that Fontecuberta had died the previous February.

Governor Terán had finally made contact with the sea force and together they made their tortuous way overland through rain, marshes, and rampaging rivers, arriving among the Hasinai on October 26. He set up his camp near Casañas' mission and, in spite of the poor season for traveling, decided to carry out his orders for making an exploration of the Río de los Cadodachos, now the Red River, some fifty leagues to the east. Terán's rather

15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid.
cursory "exploration" revealed little more than the fact that the river was navigable, for he was back again by the end of December. Now his principal worry seemed to be in getting home to Mexico as quickly as possible. He would have no time to found the eight missions which had been planned. Besides, the expenditures required for the foundations would be too great a drain upon the royal treasury. Then again, there were too many people in the camp to be supported and the food supply was running short.

Before taking his hasty departure in February, 1692, the governor handed over to the missions such articles as yokes for oxen, farm implements like plowshares and hoes, and some cattle. He assembled the Indians and ceremoniously bestowed his staff of command upon the principal cacique of the Hasinai and gave out clothing, knives, glass beads, and other articles. The missionaries received their church articles including vestments, ornaments, bells, and such useful equipment as all the materials for setting up a forge and carpenter shop, which had been donated by the viceroy, Conde de Galve, in the name of the king. To protect the padres he left behind an escort of fifteen soldiers, and

20 Ibid., also Arricivita, *Crónica Seráfica*, 213.
21 Espinosa, *Chrónica Apostólica*, 413.
set out for home. Unhappily, "some of the religious, who had lost heart and sighed to return to the quiet of their convents, also left." Terán's crowning act of inefficiency was his failure to take proper steps for the maintenance of communication between the missions and the Spanish settlements so as to insure an adequate flow of supplies to the missionaries. This meant that the missions were isolated from the rest of the world in the midst of a wilderness, two hundred and fifty leagues from the nearest Spanish posts. It was extremely doubtful indeed if the missions could be maintained under such circumstances.

Nevertheless, the Fathers, under the leadership of Hidalgo, who was superior of the mission San Francisco de los Tejas, determined to make a success of the enterprise. At first they tried to get the Indians to congregate into pueblos, but without success because the small force of soldiers could not make them do so. Also, there were no extensive areas in the little valleys large enough for all to be able to sow their crops. As a result, each Indian family lived on his own little rancho with its spring and small clearing in which to plant. Since their hoes were made of walnut wood dried by heating, they could only cultivate the softest ground. The missionaries, in order not to lose contact

22 Ibid.
23 Shea, History of Catholic Church, I, 481.
24 Espinosa, Crónica Apostólica, 414.
with each other by visiting the scattered rancherías, had to content themselves with catechizing only those who came to see them every day. In the same year, 1692, the padres found themselves faced with another general epidemic, from which they were able to derive some consolation by baptising many dying babies. This, however, had a totally unexpected effect upon the attitude of the Indians toward the Spaniards. With the simple logic of the savage mind, they believed that it was the water of baptism which caused the babies to die.

Another reason for the growing resentment of the Hasinai toward the Europeans was the conduct of the soldiers. Of the fifteen whom Terán had left behind, some died, others fled, and only nine remained. "These nine, alone, free, and not knowing how to maintain themselves in the continence worthy of a Christian, took away the Indians' own wives, and this brought on scandal and complaints from the Indians, which the padres were without the power to remedy." Inaction, no doubt, was a contributing factor to their licentiousness. Perhaps the only real military action they had engaged in during the entire two years they had been there, was in August, 1692, when they joined the Hasinai in a campaign against the Apaches. Hidalgo relates that one night, while the

25 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 214.
26 Ibid.
28 Espinosa, Crónica Apostólica, 413.
invaders were sleeping peacefully in Apache territory, they were suddenly attacked, and had it not been for the firearms of the Spaniards, not one of them would have returned home.29 Trouble in the missions caused by the unbearable conduct of the military guard was not an altogether new experience for the missionaries. A few years before, they had abandoned one of their missions at Río Blanco on the northern frontier of Nuevo León for just that reason. It is related that one of the missionaries used to add to his Litany of the Saints the appropriate invocation: From the military, O Lord, deliver us.30

In spite of these difficulties, however, the Franciscans were so encouraged by their success with the Indians that they decided to petition the formal establishment of the missions by royal decree. Father Casañas was entrusted with this task and he set out for Mexico, probably in the spring or summer of 1692.31 He was never to see Texas again.32

The missionaries had built high hopes upon a bumper crop that year to replenish their meager food supply. These hopes now

31 She, History of the Catholic Church, I, 481.
32 Before Casañas could return, the Texas missions were abandoned. He was then sent to New Mexico where he suffered martyrdom at the hands of Apaches in 1696.
began to dwindle as drought struck the land.  

33 The crops were a total failure, which meant the loss of precious seed for the next year's planting. Most of the cattle died. The winter was especially severe and by the spring of 1693 the situation was desperate.

News of the plight of the missionaries was brought to Coahuila by two Indians who arrived in October of the previous year. They reported that the priests were in good health, but in sore need of food, which they were anxiously awaiting from Mexico. When this information reached the viceroy, he issued orders for a relief party to be sent out under the leadership of Gregorio de Salinas, at that time governor of Coahuila.  

34 The party left Monterrey on May 3, 1693, with ninety-seven packloads of provisions and one hundred and twenty horses, reaching the mission of San Francisco de los Tejas on June 8. They were just in time, because the priests had decided to leave the country in July if no help came.

Governor Salinas was soon brought up to date on what had been happening in the missions. The second mission of Santa María had been destroyed by a flood, so all the Spaniards were now living

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33 Andrés Cavo, Los Tres Siglos de Mexico, Mexico, II, 1836, 79.

34 The account which follows concerning the relief expedition, the abandonment of the missions, and the flight of the missionaries, unless otherwise noted, is taken from William Howard Dunn, Spanish and French Rivalry in the Gulf Region of the United States, 1678-1702, University of Texas Bulletin No. 1705, Austin, Texas, January 20, 1917, 139-143.
at Hidalgo's mission of San Francisco. Sickness had cost the life of one priest. For several weeks they had been living on nothing but corn. For reasons noted previously, the friendliness and docility of the Indians had changed to distrust, suspicion, and aversion. They had refused to attend church services and had even gone so far as to threaten the missionaries with death if they would not leave. Father Massanet, who had done so much to bring the priests to them, had changed his opinion of the Hasinai and was ready to give up the whole undertaking. Proof of this can be found in the formal report he drew up for the viceroy setting forth the condition of the missions in such a pessimistic light that he hoped the viceroy would be induced to order the abandonment of the project.

After staying a week, Salinas returned to Monclova taking two of the religious with him, and made his report. Massanet's account produced the desired result, for the Junta General of August 31, 1693, agreed to dispatch a troop of soldiers to conduct the missionaries safely back to Mexico. By the time the governor received his orders to rescue the religious, it was October, and his council unanimously agreed that the season was too late for an expedition into Texas. It would have to be postponed until the following spring.

Meanwhile, in the Texas missions, matters were steadily going from bad to worse. There were signs of restlessness and increasing hostility on the part of the natives. Evidently something
was afoot." In August, 1693, the padres learned that a chieftain of the Tejas had assembled the surrounding tribes and had proposed a general massacre of the Spaniards to be carried out at the beginning of cold weather. The French were said to be implicated in the plot. From then on, Massanet put the missions on a war footing. Sentinel duty was maintained day and night. Cannon were loaded and lighted fuses were kept on hand for instant action. He also managed to relieve some Indians of four French arquebuses to add to their meager supply of firearms. He wanted the Indians to see these preparations and perhaps think twice before making an attack.

Things remained in this critical condition until October 6, when the Indian chief openly warned the corporal of the guard that the Spaniards must leave or be killed. Massanet immediately summoned the chief to ascertain if the threat were true. When haughtily told that it was, the friar promised him that they would leave soon, but that they must not be molested in any way. If the Indians would attack them along the road, they would see how dearly the Spaniards could defend their lives.

As an added precaution, the preparations for departure were made in all secrecy. Heavy items that would impede their flight, such as church ornaments and cannon, were buried. The sacred vestments were placed in special receptacles which were carefully hidden; church bells and tools were also buried. The flight began on October 25 after Massanet set fire to the mission.
of San Francisco, which they last saw as a heap of smoldering ruins. The Indians followed them from a distance but made no hostile moves against them. After reaching the Colorado River, the fugitives lost their bearings and wandered aimlessly for forty days until reaching the gulf coast, which they followed to Mexico. Then they made their way inland to Monclova, arriving on February 17, 1694, "after four months of almost incredible suffering."35

It must be added here, for the sake of the record, that not all the missionaries withdrew at this time. It seems that Fathers Massanet, Hidalgo, and two others stayed on among the Tejas after the withdrawal,36 possibly until sometime in 1694. Then they made their way back to civilization and probably eventually to the Colegio at Querétaro to take a much needed rest.

Thus ended, disappointingly, in abandonment and flight, Hidalgo's first great adventure as a missionary among the Hasinai. He was not, however, to forget them, nor to lose interest in their conversion. Before leaving them he had made a solemn agreement with their chief captain that he would some day return with priests to their country.37 And he intended to keep it. He was to watch

35 Dunn, Spanish and French Rivalry, 143.
36 Morfi, History of Texas, footnote 67 of Castañeda, Part One, 183.
constantly for an opportunity to do so, and he was to move heaven and earth in an effort to realize his dream of returning among them. "The dream of this man was to be realized twenty years later. To him we owe the reoccupation of east Texas." 38

CHAPTER IV

WATCHFUL WAITING

There is a blank in the story of Fray Francisco Hidalgo between the years 1694 and 1697. Arricivita, who wrote the account of his life for the chronicles of the Colegio, passes over these three years by simply stating "that there is no document which specifies individually what he did out of the ordinary in the ministry."\(^1\) The thread of this life can be picked up again in 1697 when Fray Dies and he left the Colegio to preach missions in the bishopric of Puebla. Since his ambition to convert pagan Indians had been denied to him in the north, he set out with the determination to cross over into the "hot land" on the coast and preach to the infidels there. This he did for a time, and later remarked that because of the intolerable heat of the land, the burnt color of its inhabitants, the unrestrained vices of the Trapiche Indians, he almost feared he was in hell, seeing such a vivid representation of it.\(^2\)

It so happened at this time, that the attention of the

\(^1\) Arricivita, *Crónica Seráfica*, 215.

\(^2\) Ibid.
Querétaro Friars was again directed to the northern frontiers of Mexico by the offer of Don Juan Pérez Merino, governor of Nuevo León, to assist them in founding a mission at a spring called La Punta de Lampazos, fifteen leagues beyond Boca de Leones and thirty leagues east of Monclova. Fray Antonio Margil de Jesús, then guardian of the Colegio, eagerly accepted the offer, seeing in it an opportunity for his priests to return to their principal work of converting the heathen.

Chosen to make the new foundation were Fathers Diego Salazar and Francisco Hidalgo. Armed with permits from the Comisario General and the bishop of Guadalajara, Don Fray Felipe Galindo, the two missionaries set out on their long trek of two hundred leagues to Monterrey, where they presented their papers to the new governor of Nuevo León, Don Juan de Vergara. Being as sympathetic to this project as was his predecessor, Pérez Merino, he gave them the dispatches necessary for them to take royal possession of the mission site. Accompanied by the alcalde mayor of Boca de Leones, some other Spaniards, and four Tlaxcalteca Indians, the two priests took possession of the land on November 7, 1698. Through an interpreter they explained to the Indians of the ranchería the purpose of their coming.

3 Ibid., 237.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid., 237-238.
So quickly did the two padres gain the good will of the natives, and so eagerly did they congregate, that, within five days after their arrival, they had constructed a church of straw, which they named in honor of María Santísima de los Dolores. Encouraged by the generous patronage of the governor and other devoted persons, the mission progressed so rapidly that within a year the straw church was replaced by a sturdy one of adobe bricks, and the padres had their own dwelling place where they taught catechism morning and afternoons. Fray Salazar, observing that some Indians were not regular in attending the daily instruction because they had no farms and therefore were required to roam the woods in search of game and wild fruit, obtained from some benefactors of the mission a few yoke of oxen and a supply of seed so that they could plant farms nearby and thus learn to live in society as well as get their daily ration of Christian doctrine. With the stipends from his Masses he also purchased meat for them.

The remarkable prosperity of Dolores mission eventually drew down upon it the jealousy and envy of neighboring missionaries in older establishments. Their complaints reached the ears of the viceroy himself, who requested the governor of Coahuila to inform him whether or not the mission of Dolores were prejudicial to the interests of the other missions in his territory. To this

6 Ibid., 238.
7 Ibid., 238-239.
the governor emphatically replied:

Not only is the said mission of Los Dolores . . . not injurious to the province of Coahuila, but also, would that it were possible, by the grace of God, that one hundred more missionaries would enter the lands of this territory, because, for all, there is an abundant harvest.8

This effectively put an end to the accusations.

The fame of Dolores mission brought a request from the Indians on the Río de Sabinas, fifteen leagues distant, to establish another among their people. Fray Salazar investigated the location, and, on what was called the Camino de la Nueva Francia y de Texas, he encountered many pagans and good accommodations for placing missions. With the permission of the governor of Coahuila he founded the mission of San Juan Bautista on June 23, 1699, appointing Hidalgo as its minister.9 Royal confirmation of the establishment of these two missions was given by Philip V, which included the faculties to found as many more as necessary, as well as commanding the governor to patronize, defend, and help the religious of the Colegio to advance the spread of the missions in that direction.10 Salazar lost no time in hastening back to Queréteraro in order to render an account of his latest activities to the guardian and to ask for more men.

Meanwhile, Hidalgo was having his difficulties keeping

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8 Ibid., 239.
9 Ibid., 239-240.
10 Ibid., 216.
the Indians assembled at the mission. It seems that shortly after gathering his one hundred and fifty neophytes at the mission, they ran away, taking the herd of mission cattle with them. The determined padre went in pursuit of them as far as the Río Grande, rounding up at least some of the fugitives. Together with these and a number of other Indians he had met during the chase, he re-established the mission of San Juan Bautista in the vicinity of the Río Bravo. Salazar arrived soon after with two companions, finding Hidalgo "very cheerful in his ministry and happy in the midst of the many needs and heartaches which are characteristic of a new mission . . . ."12

With the additional help, the work of organizing the new mission progressed rapidly, until an unfortunate incident occurred which brought all their work to nought. This was the killing, whether by accident or design, of a Christian Tejas Indian, whom one of the missionaries (probably Hidalgo), was saving to act as interpreter when the next entrada to the lands of the Tejas would be made. Since he had been killed by a local Indian, the mission Indians feared that his relatives would avenge his death upon them, so they left the pueblo and sought safety in the forests. The

11 Vito Alessio Robles, Coahuila y Texas en la Epoca Colonial, Mexico, D.F., 1938, 374.
12 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 240.
three missionaries had no other recourse but to retire to Los Dolores.13

Far from being discouraged by these reverses, Salazar, Hidalgo, and their two companions (Antonio Olivares and Marcos Guereña) rebuilt the mission of San Juan Bautista in January, 1700, on a site still farther north and nearer the Río Grande,14 which became its permanent location. It was later provided with a presidio, thus forming the farthest outpost of Spanish civilization below the Río Grande.15 It was much used afterwards as a starting point for expeditions into Texas. Hidalgo was again named its minister. As there yet remained more than five hundred Indians desirous of being placed in missions, Salazar established two others in the area that same year, those of San Bernardo and San Francisco Solano, but these were of short duration.16

Here, at the very doorstep of Texas, Hidalgo labored zealously to construct his mission of San Juan Bautista. He built a church, then his living quarters, to which he gradually added other rooms, in all of which work of construction the Indians

13 Ibid., 240-241.

14 The new site was forty miles below the present city of Eagle Pass.

15 Robert Carlton Clark, The Beginnings of Texas, 1684-1718, Bulletin of the University of Texas, No. 98, Austin, Texas, December 1, 1907, 44.

joined "con gusto." Just when he was deserving of some rest, the
time of obedience called him back to Querétaro to shoulder still
greater responsibilities, for he had been elected superior of the
Colegio at its chapter held in November, 1700. He assumed his
new duties on January 31, 1701, appointing Fray Margil, his pred-
ecessor, as vicar and retaining the discretorio, or house council
of the previous administration.\textsuperscript{17}

During the three-year term of his guardianship, Hidal-
go's paramount interest was to obtain more adequate military pro-
tection for the four missions near the Río Grande and also to get
a fixed yearly income for their maintenance from the royal treas-
ury. To achieve the first, he managed to gain the ear of Bishop
Felipe Galindo of Guadalajara while that dignitary was making a
visititation of Coahuila, warning him that unless the governor pro-
vided some means of defense for the missions, the Indians could
not be expected to remain there, exposed, as they were, to the
forays of the Apaches.\textsuperscript{18} At the request of the bishop a special
junta, composed of the governors of the northern provinces and
the missionaries, met at La Punta where it was resolved that a
presidio should be established at the mission of San Juan Bautis-
ta. This decision, with the blessing of the new guardian, was
delivered to the authorities in Mexico City by Father Olivares.

\textsuperscript{17} Arricivita, \textit{Crónica Seráfica}, 216-217.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 241-242.
Here it was given careful consideration in the Junta General de Guerra, which voted to establish the presidio. A troop of thirty men equipped with provisions for two years and a supply of implements for farming, was dispatched to the San Juan mission.19

Hidalgo next turned to the problem of getting financial aid. So far, the Colegio had borne the burden of supplying its Río Grande missions with such essentials as wax, wine, chocolate, and vestments. With four missions to take care of, the supply had been less than adequate and the revenues of the Colegio less than sufficient to bear the expense. The missions could not support themselves by alms because of being far removed from the centers of Spanish population. The guardian exposed this difficulty to the viceroy, who, after consulting the Junta General, granted a yearly stipend of 450 pesos to each religious missionary, one-third to be used for divine worship, one-third for the needs of the missionaries, and one-third for the needs of the Indians.20

Most superiors wish to be remembered for having built something, and Father Guardian Hidalgo was no exception. He had the convent church of the Colegio completely renovated and a domed transept added, all at the expense of the "Lord Commissary of Court and Cross",21 Don Juan Caballero y Ocio. The solemn dedication

19 Ibid., 217.
20 Ibid.
21 Señor Comisario de Corte y Cruzada.
of the transformed edifice took place in 1702, the second year of his guardianship.22

It was in this same year that the missionaries whom Hidalgo had sent to Zacatecas were again beseeched with requests for the founding of a Colegio Apostólico there, similar to the one in Querétaro. This time the determined Zacatecans were not to be put off. They were ready to make an outright donation to the Franciscans of the church and sanctuary comprising the hospice of Our lady of Guadalupe, as well as providing them with a suitable site for a convent. The citizens of Zacatecas, some of whom were wealthy mine owners, offered to collect the funds needed to erect the convent and support the priests.23 There was no refusing such an offer, and so, in 1704, the second Apostolic College in America was founded, with Father Margil becoming its first superior. Ten years later, missionaries from both these Colegios were to walk side by side into Texas when Spain made its second determined effort to settle that frontier province.

Hidalgo's guardianship came to an end with the appointment of his successor by the local chapter in October, 1703. Once more a simple subject, he was sent to join his former co-worker, Father Olivares, at the mission of San Francisco Solano, which he had helped to found three years before. Shortly after,

22 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 217-218.
23 Ibid., 218.
the two priests transferred the mission from its old site in the Valle de la Circuncisión to the Valle de San Ildefonso. In the vicinity of their new location were considerable numbers of pagans from among whom they succeeded in gathering about four hundred, catechizing them and teaching them how to live together as members of a civilized community. The mission prospered during the next four years until 1708, when a band of hostile Tobosos Indians, who lived only two leagues from the mission, attacked the peaceful settlement, killing eight Christian Indians and making off with two captives. The terrified survivors completely abandoned their pueblo and so Hidalgo sadly packed up the sacred vestments and withdrew to San Juan Bautista, leaving a devoted lay brother among the scattered neophytes to teach them Christian doctrine. From his base at San Juan, Hidalgo frequently made the journey of thirty-two leagues to the mission church to say Mass, give instruction, baptize infants and the sick, until Olivares returned from Mexico City at the end of the year with orders to transfer the mission to the San Antonio River.

24 Ibid., 219. Few missions have undergone as many changes of location as the Solano mission. It is also interesting to note that the presidio of San Juan Bautista was established in the exact location of the original site of this mission in the Valle de la Circuncisión. Cf. Robles, Coahuila y Texas, 376

25 Ibid. Whether this order to transfer the mission to Texas was one of the objects of the Olivares-Espinosa entrada of 1709 is purely conjectural. If it was, the order was not carried out until 1718 when Olivares founded the mission of San Antonio de Valero by removing the entire mission, both Indians and equipment, to that site. Cf. Clark, Beginnings of Texas, 78-87.
Hidalgo's return to San Juan Bautista, the gateway to Texas, in 1708, must have reminded him that already fifteen years had passed since he had last seen his beloved, if ungrateful, Indians of that province, or since he had even so much as set foot on their land. In all these years he had never given up the hope of some day returning with priests to minister to them. Nevertheless, he had not been content with mere hoping, but had bent all his efforts to achieve its fulfillment. When he had been chosen superior of the Colegio Apostólico, he had realized that his counsels carried more weight and that his advices were given a more respectful consideration. It was then that he had begun in earnest his campaign of the pen to bring about the reestablishment of the Texas missions.

As the first step in these epistolary maneuvers, he wrote, while still guardian, an extensive report embodying well-considered plans for the spiritual and temporal conquest of Texas. This report was delivered into the hands of the Reverend Father Commissary General of the Indies, Fray Lucas Alvarez de Toledo, for presentation to His Majesty, Philip V of the House of Bourbon. What became of this report is disclosed in a letter written to Hidalgo by the Commissary.

26 Ibid., 220.

27 Alvarez de Toledo to Hidalgo, February 8, 1705, "The Work of Fray Francisco Hidalgo among the Texas Indians," Herbert E. Bolton transcripts from the Archivo del Colegio de la Santa Cruz, Querétaro, Mexico, 1.
Concerning the report for His Majesty about the patronage of the missions of the Tejas, it has not seemed to me convenient now to enter into this proposition, inasmuch as His Majesty (may God keep him) is so greatly preoccupied with the great wars which the Most High permits him to have, and which have lasted for some years. Therefore, this is not the time to present the above proposition for the reason that it cannot be attended to with the wisdom and care which it deserves.  

But Hidalgo was not one to be content with waiting until it was "convenient" or until the right time had come. When one door was closed to him, he always found another to knock upon. If the king was too "preoccupied" to hear him, he would turn to the viceroy. Some time during the year 1708, the Lord Viceroy, Duke of Alburquerque, received Hidalgo's letter requesting permission to lead a group of missionaries into Texas. After consultation with the Real Junta, and, upon its advice, this highest representative of the king's authority in Mexico issued a decree under date of August 18, 1708, granting Hidalgo permission to pass over to the conversion of the pagan Indians of Texas.  

"Of course," remarked the chronicler, "this permission meant nothing, since the name of Texas had become so odious to the religious that they did not even want to pronounce it--remembering the exhorbitant cost to them of the first attempted entry."  

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28 The war referred to was the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1713), commonly known in the colonies as Queen Anne's War.  
29 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 221.  
30 Ibid.
If Hidalgo had even remotely expected to get such a positive answer from the viceroy, then he should have anticipated the violent reaction on the part of his superiors that was soon to follow. He had been importuning them for years to return to Texas, but had been faced with as many contradictions and difficulties from the members of his own religious family as from the civil authorities. Now, by appealing directly to the viceroy, he had gone over their heads. Such high-handed action could never be tolerated.

One month later, the highest authority of the Colegio, consisting of the four members of the house council under the presidency of the Father Guardian, met in solemn session to consider the viceregal decree of August 16. This venerable body spared no words in making its position clear. Where Hidalgo had mentioned in his report to the viceroy that he had companions to help him in the conversion of the Tejas Indians, the discretos flatly stated that such companions "do not exist." They also noted that the execution of the decree was contingent upon there being a sufficient number of priests for the missions already founded. To this the councillors pointed out that "now there are no priests in this Colegio except for the missions already set up,


because several of the most indispensable have died and others have been taken away from the Colegio to serve as founders for the Colegios of Guatemala and Zacatecas." They also added that the group of missionaries which was shortly expected to arrive from Spain "had been reduced to two priests and two choir brothers", thus wiping out all hopes for adequate replacements.

On the touchy problem of financing the expedition, the reverend council remarked that since the distance between the missions on the Río Grande and the place where Father Hidalgo wanted to establish them was 120 leagues, it would be necessary for the king to agree to the expenses, "which, as years ago, were fruitlessly borne by him in the last entrada to the Tejas at the importunities of some of the priests from this Colegio." The Discretorio saw no sense in founding missions so far away when there were great numbers of heathen Indians in the intervening lands who were asking for baptism and missionaries. Would it not be more prudent, asked the council, to advance to the Tejas by degrees, planting missions step by step until reaching them? The final verdict of the council was rendered as follows:

... [T]he said Reverend Discretorio (esteeming highly the referred-to decree of His Excellency and hoping that

33 It is quite possible that this remark had reference to the accusations made against the priests of the Colegio after the unhappy Terán entrada of having wasted the funds granted them by the king. A thorough investigation finally exonerated the Colegio from all blame in the matter. Cf. Espinosa, Chronica Apostólica, 414-415.
it can be fulfilled at a more convenient time, when there are ministers) has resolved that the said Padre Predicador Fray Francisco Hidalgo not go over now to the said Tejas nor found any other mission without a new order and consent given in writing by the guardian and councillors of this above-mentioned Colegio, to whom, according to the Bullas Apostólicas, belongs the decision on questions which arise in this matter.

Appending their names to this resolution were: Fray Antonio de San Buenaventura y Olivares, guardián, and Joseph Diez, Angel Duque, Domingo Moreno, and Alonso de la Concepción, discretos.

This decision, as well as the men who had concurred in it, were not quickly forgotten by Hidalgo. Two years later he made the following reference to this incident in a letter to his close friend, Fray Isidro de Espinosa:

I hope in God, that if it is ever reported that Father Hidalgo has lost the mission of San Juan Bautista, then this proverb will be remembered and clearly impressed on your mind: "The harder the wheels of the press are turned, the more vivid and perfect becomes the color-shade." I, my Father, was born into the world persecuted. It is well known to Your Reverence what the former guardian, Olivares, and his Reverend Council did to me, when, by their well-meaning contradictions, the north was lost to my designs. This is how the spirit is crushed in order that it may be purified.

Meanwhile, Hidalgo was keeping up his correspondence with the Comisario General de Indias in Madrid and was sending

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34 In a translation of part of this letter by Mattie Austin Hatcher, "Descriptions of the Tejas or Asinai Indians, 1691-1722," SHQ, Austin, Texas, XXXI, July, 1927, 50-52, she erroneously states the addressee to be Fray Isidro Cassos.

35 Hidalgo to Espinosa, November 20, 1710, Archivo del Colegio, 7-8.
new reports to him on the project of reentering Texas by whatever chance traveller to Spain would carry them. In answer to his letter of February 25, 1708, the comisario wrote:

Concerning the report which the bishop of Puerto-rico left in my hands for His Majesty to accomplish this end, I am certain that it was presented, but as so many things happened afterwards, and with the entrance of the Portuguese into this Court, there was so much confusion, and with new secretaries of the Indies and even new secretaries of the Council, it is most difficult to look for the report or to investigate its success, or to find out the decision which was taken on it. For which it appears to me necessary that a new representation be made again to His Majesty in which is set down all the things and reasons that can lead to this end and which may move the royal mind. I shall apply myself to solicit the best expedient with these gentlemen.36

At home, within the sphere of his own influence over the priests of the Colegio, Hidalgo spared no efforts to overcome their lukewarmness toward Texas. He sought means day and night to reawaken interest in it. He accumulated a store of information about Texas from works of native writers37 and from accounts of various travellers who had been there. This information, carefully set down in notebooks, was passed on, through letters, to influential persons, who were exhorted by Hidalgo to lend their support to the heroic enterprise of converting the Tejas.38

36 Alvarez de Toledo to Hidalgo, December 16, 1708, Archivo del Colegio, 5.

37 "Autores regnícolas."

38 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 221. If these notebooks and letters still exist, they should prove a valuable source of information on Texas during the first decade of the eighteenth century.
Finally, it seemed as if something would be done. Apparently Hidalgo had been informed that the Tejas, in order to come closer to Mexico in search of the Spaniards, had left their lands and were planting the fields near the Trinity River. In 1709, by order of the viceroy, Father Guardian Olivares made a visitation of the missions on the Río Grande and from here made an entrada into Texas to see if Hidalgo's information was correct. Accompanied by Espinosa, he penetrated almost to the land of the Tejas without finding them, or any other evidence that they were not in the same place as always. Lacking the necessary supplies with which to continue farther, they returned to the Río Grande.

It might be well to consider now whether Father Hidalgo ever left his mission of San Juan Bautista to labor alone among the Hasinai. The writer has found references from several historians that he did. Vito Robles says, "Fray Francisco Hidalgo, one of the founders of the mission of San Juan Bautista de Río Grande,


40 Espinosa, Crónica Apostólica, 416. It is difficult to understand why Hidalgo, who was at San Juan Bautista with Espinosa, was not chosen by Olivares to accompany him on this entrada. Perhaps it was due to their differences of opinion on Texas, or even may have been a manifestation of dislike for Hidalgo. Evidence of this mutual feeling for each other was to rise to the surface again later.
made frequent trips to the province of Texas and he tenaciously proposed the reoccupation of the said province."41 Robert Clark remarks that from the San Juan mission "Fray Hidalgo set out alone for the country of the Asinais, where he lived and labored for several years."42 Clarence Wharton states: "Unable to get support for his enterprise, Father Hidalgo made a journey alone and barefoot to his friends, the Tejas, about 1711."43 None of these writers indicated the sources from which they derived their information. To this author it seems very unlikely that Hidalgo ever made such a trip or trips, and still more improbable that he lived among the Tejas for several years. To support this opinion the reader is referred to the decision of the Reverend Discretorio quoted above to the effect that Father Hidalgo was "not to go over now to the said Tejas nor to found any other mission without a new order and consent given in writing by the guardian and councillors . . . ."44 Such a clear-cut command from the highest authority of the Colegio would be understood as seriously binding in conscience for any sincere religious. For Hidalgo to absent himself frequently or for long periods of time from the mission entrusted to his care would be tantamount to grave disobedience and neglect, and surely would

41 Coahuila y Texas, 425-426.
42 Beginnings of Texas, 45.
44 Cf. page 49 of this thesis.
have resulted in his expulsion from the Colegio. In addition to these purely logical considerations can be added this statement by Herbert Bolton:

A myth has found currency in recent years to the effect that, despite this opposition, Hidalgo returned to Texas, dwelt for a time among the Asinain and there wrote his appeal to the French priests. But his writings preserved in the College of Querétaro in Mexico and examined by the author disprove the story.45

It must be remembered that while Hidalgo was carrying on his campaign on behalf of the Asinai, writing a constant stream of letters to men in high places, and composing endless reports for the dilatory Council of the Indies, he still had his mission of San Juan Bautista to take care of. Evidence of its flourishing condition can be gathered from Hidalgo's report of 1710 to the Prefect of Missions, wherein these statistics, from its foundation ten years before, are noted:46

Solemn and necessary baptisms .......... 318
Marriages in facie ecclesiae ............. 54
Burials .................................... 172

Hidalgo enclosed a copy of this report in a lengthy letter to his good friend, Father Espinosa, adding comments where needed.47 He began by remarking that the company of soldiers at

46 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 221.
47 Hidalgo to Espinosa, November 20, 1710, Archivo del Colegio, 7-9.
the near-by presidio had already been increased from its original complement of thirty men and that its present commander was Captain Pedro de Aguirre. Since the time that the inventory of persons living at the mission had been drawn up, Hidalgo had already performed three additional marriages, bringing the total number of married couples then staying at San Juan to thirty-two. Of these, two couples had fled from the mission, one to the Mesa Catujanes where the wife had been captured by the Tobosos, and the other to the mission of Caldera. Hidalgo was going to request the return of the latter pair to their home pueblo.

Revealing that his heart was still with the Tejas whom he had been forced to abandon many years ago, Hidalgo's letter is replete with interesting stories about his experiences among them and bits of information about their customs and practices. It is evident that he looked upon Father Espinosa as a likely recruit for the Texas missions.

He related how he gradually became convinced that Fray Julio de Garaycochea, his companion on the Texas missions in 1691, frequently received a special interior inspiration from God which directed him to the exact hut in which there was a dying Indian in need of baptism. He recalled how he had been with the saintly priest on two occasions when they were passing through large Indian villages, and the priest, for no apparent reason and without anyone informing him, had stopped in front of an Indian hut, dismounted, and had gone inside, each time to find a dying person to
whom he administered baptism. On another occasion he had wit-nessed his companion order a hostile Tesusan Indian, who was danc-ing in a circle of live coals before a hut in which lay a sick In-dian, not to come out of the circle in the name of God, until the sick one had been baptized. And it so happened.

Hidalgo also told about the two "children from God" who were supposed to dwell in the house of the high priest. When the Indians came to pray there at night, the high priest, practicing the ancient art of ventriloquism, would assume their voices, de-manding what he needed for their use, threatening them with pun-ishment by snake bites if they refused. Once Father Antonio Bor-doy entered this house, in spite of the warning that he would cer-tainly die, to see the two children, but all he found was a little box with packages.

Hidalgo recalled that the most important festival cele-brated by the Hasinai was the harvest festival, and that it was the only one at which the Indians danced. After the harvest, each family gave a portion of its crop of corn and beans to the high priest. When an Indian killed a deer, the priest was called, who expertly quartered it on the spot, selecting the portion that

48 Ibid., 9-10.
50 Ibid., 51.
51 Ibid., 51-52.
52 Ibid., 52.
was later to be brought to him in deference to his priestly office. Hidalgo noted that the doors of all the Indian houses faced the east, because, as they explained, the wind never blew from that side.

Concerning the derivation of the name "Tejas" or "Texas", Professor Bolton explains that it means "friends", or more technically "allies". The term was first used by the tribes around the eastern missions and was later attached, as a group name, to the large number of tribes allied against the Apaches. The word "Texas" was also used as a form of greeting, like "hello, friend", with which they frequently saluted the Spaniards. Other meanings, such as "land of flowers", "tiled roofs", and "paradise" have no trustworthy evidence as basis according to Bolton.

The Hasinaí belonged to the Caddoan linguistic stock, comprising three large families of Indians: (1) the northern family, represented by the Arikara in North Dakota, (2) the middle, comprising the Pawnee confederacy on the Platte River, and (3) the southern, made up of tribes in east Texas. Of the southern group, the tribes around the Queretaran missions represented one of the highest forms of native society between the Red and upper Río Grande Rivers. Their political importance was, therefore, rather considerable. Bolton suggests that the fame and relative culture

53 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
of the Hasinai Indians was a factor worth noting when the Spaniards chose the location of their missions in Texas.55

No doubt, Father Hidalgo, who had labored among various tribes of Indians for well over a quarter of a century, was well aware of the high qualities of the Hasinai, and of the great possibilities for their conversion and future usefulness to the Spaniards. Yet, although he had left no stone unturned in his efforts to effect a return to Texas, he had so far been unsuccessful. Indifference and apathy were met at every turn. How this letter-writing missionary suddenly brought about a complete reversal in Spain's attitude towards Texas will constitute the subject matter of the next chapter.

55 The above explanation was taken from Herbert E. Bolton, "The Native Tribes About the East Texas Missions," SHQ, XI, April, 1908, 250-252.
FIGURE 1
FIELD OF FRAY HIDALGO'S MISSIONARY LABORS IN MEXICO
CHAPTER V

STRANGE ANSWER TO A STRANGE LETTER

On January 17, 1711, Fray Francisco Hidalgo sat down at his writing-table in the mission of San Juan Bautista on the Rio Grande and wrote the most momentous letter of his entire missionary career. It was an unusual letter because it was not addressed to his religious superiors nor to the Spanish civil authorities, but to the French. To understand how Hidalgo conceived the idea of addressing himself to the traditional enemies of Spain, it is necessary to realize the extent of French colonization and exploration which had already traversed the entire length of the Mississippi River and had penetrated into Louisiana.

Under Philip V (1700-1724), Bourbon king of Spain, France had been practically given permission to colonize Louisiana on the pretext of protecting Spain's gulf possessions from England. During this time, the French settlement at Biloxi had been quietly moved to Mobile Bay, nearer the Spanish border. In 1701 the Sieur de Bienville became governor of Louisiana. Under his vigorous and energetic leadership, alliances were made with the tribes east and west of the Mississippi to wrest the southern fur trade from the English. The Mississippi, Mobile, and Red Rivers

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were explored. French traders from Canada and Illinois were exploring the Missouri for hundreds of miles and trading posts were being constructed southward from the Illinois to the lower Ohio. By 1718 New Orleans had been founded, thus fastening France's hold on Louisiana as well as effectively splitting in two Spain's colonies around the Gulf of Mexico.¹

Disturbing rumors of these French activities were continually reaching the Spanish border. Since the Mission San Juan Bautista served as a listening post for the happenings beyond the Río Grande, Hidalgo was in a perfect position to learn of these activities. He began to sense the general feeling of alarm that these rumors were producing and the thought occurred to him that he could put the French menace to good advantage. He understood perfectly well that Spain's sudden interest in founding missions in Texas in 1690 and 1691 had been caused primarily by fear of French intrusion following La Salle's short-lived settlement at Matagorda Bay. When this fear later proved groundless and subsided, so did her interest in the missions. If this fear could be revived again, Hidalgo felt sure that the reestablishment of the Texas missions would quickly follow. Therefore, he wrote his letter to the French. The following is Hidalgo's² explanation of

¹ This summation was taken from Bolton, Spanish Borderlands, 219-220.
why he took this action:

In seeking to carry out this agreement\(^3\) and being under this obligation, I did all in my power with my prelates and superiors . . . . But due to events which occurred, all was blank without a step of any kind being taken. Seeing that all the means I had taken had failed, a happy thought occurred to me. I knew that the French were settling this section, as well as that further on, when it was known to be the territory of His Majesty bordering on the Mexican Gulf; and [it was also known] that, with great determination, they were encroaching more and more on these frontiers of New Spain. I conceived the idea of writing two letters to them on different occasions in order that one of them [at least] might fall into their hands, to see if I could secure an answer from them for the purpose of sending it to that superior government.\(^4\)

This was what Hidalgo hoped for—an answer to his letter which he could show to the Spanish authorities as proof that Spain's territory of Texas was in imminent danger. With this proof in hand, he knew that the missions would be reestablished without delay.\(^5\)

Since neither one of Hidalgo's letters has yet been found by historians, their contents can be deduced only from what others have said about them. It seems quite certain that the first was written in Spanish on January 17, 1711, and was addressed to the French missionaries of the territory of the Mississippi River, or Río de la Palizada as the Spaniards called it. According to Arricivita,\(^6\) it contained an appeal to the missionaries to use

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3 Hidalgo's agreement with the chief captain of the Tejas in 1694 to return with ministers to their land.

4 Italics not in original.

5 Bolton, Spanish Borderlands, 221.

6 Crónica Seráfica, 221.
their influence in pacifying the warring nations around the Asinai, so that peace being restored, that nation could be converted for God's greater honor and glory. As one historian remarked:

Just why pacification of the Louisiana tribes bordering on the Texas Indians would honor Heaven more than missionary labors in other parts of Louisiana he did not make clear, but it is plain enough that the first result of the pacification would be the establishment of French posts near or among the Asinai. This might or might not honor Heaven, but it would undoubtedly interest Spain.7

Louis de St. Denis, the man sent by Governor Cadillac to find Hidalgo and who actually saw the letter, in his official statement to the Spanish authorities concerning the object of his coming to Mexico, declared that Hidalgo sent the letter "to inquire whether the Río de la Palizada [Mississippi] was settled by French or English Catholics, and if it might be possible for him to go to settle and to found missions for the security of the Tejas."8 Of course, it is clear from Hidalgo's own statement cited above, that he "knew that the French were settling this section."

In his History of Louisiana, Chambers states that Hidalgo's letter professed his interest in the Tejas and made inquiries concerning them, but "in such a way as to convey the idea that the Tejas dwelt upon French territory and offered considerable

7 Bolton, Spanish Borderlands, 222.

opportunity for trade." Beyond this meager information, the rest must be left to speculation. Whatever were its contents, it certainly brought results.

After a year passed by without an answer, Hidalgo wrote a second letter, this time in Latin, addressed to the Señores Franc- cceses seculares, loosely translated as the "French civil authorities," which was substantially the same in content as the first. Presumably, this letter was also written from San Juan Bautista some time in 1712, because, according to his chronicler, Hidalgo returned to the convent at Querétaro before the end of that year.

This second letter apparently never did reach its destination, but the first, carried by Hidalgo's Indian servant, Lázaro, to the land of the Hasinai and there being handed about by Indians for two years, finally reached the governor of Louisiana in May, 1713. An interesting account of how this letter made its way into French hands was later told by St. Denis, who informed Hidalgo of it as follows:

Very Reverend Father,

This is [to inform you] concerning the letter which Your Reverence has had the honor of writing to the French missionaries who are located upon the borders

9 Henry E. Chambers, A History of Louisiana, 3 vols., Chicago, 1925, I, 64.

10 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 221. Although he states that it was this second letter which finally reached the governor of Louisiana, the greater weight of evidence shows that it was the first.

11 Ibid.
of the flux of the Palizada, which Your Reverence indicates to have been written on January 17, 1711. Your Reverence's servant made a mistake in telling you that he had delivered it into the hands of a Frenchman, because there was not at that time any Frenchman among the Azinais, nor had any ever come there. But God has permitted that at that time some Indians from the mission of the priest called Monsieur [sic] Dauront were in the Province of the Azinais, one of whom received the letter from the hands of the servant whom Your Reverence calls Lázaro. This Indian did not make the haste which he should have, because the letter has not come into the hands of the Governor General of la Luciana until the second of May, 1713, from which time it has caused an insatiable pleasure to the Governor and to all the missionaries who are in the country, as they look for nothing else except the glory of God, as also does our Governor.12

Hidalgo's letter proved exceedingly interesting to Governor Cadillac, especially in view of the timeliness of its arrival. Ever since the French had taken possession of the Mississippi valley, they had entertained the belief that overland commerce with Mexico would enable them to share in the wealth of New Spain. When Bienville had become governor in 1701, he had sent twelve Canadians under St. Denis as far west as the Red River to make contact with the Spaniards but had found none, because east Texas had been abandoned for eight years already.13 When Antoine Crozat, one of the richest merchants in all Europe, acquired the proprietorship of Louisiana on September 24, 1712, one of his pet projects was to build up trade with the Spanish settlements in the

12 St. Denis to Hidalgo, July 18, 1714, Bolton transcripts from the Archivo del Colegio, 15.

interior. "Cadillac, who was appointed governor the following year, had been instructed by the crown to aid the agents of Crozat with all the means at his disposal in the further establishment of trading posts and settlements. "As a matter of fact, Cadillac did not come to Louisiana for the colony's good but for his own advancement. His was a get-rich-quick mission."14 As such, Crozat was assured of his closest cooperation. Acting upon direct orders from the proprietor to approach the Spaniards with a view to establishing trade relations between Mexico and Louisiana, Cadillac had sent a vessel to Vera Cruz to exchange merchandise for cattle and to wrangle an entry permit for French ships into Mexican ports. The presumptive French, however, were not even permitted to dock their ship, as the viceroy, in no uncertain terms, informed them that all ports of New Spain were closed to foreign commerce.15

With this avenue of trade shut off, the significance of Hidalgo's letter quickly became apparent. It pointed an inviting finger to a different and more promising enterprise, that of opening an overland trade route across Texas to the northern provinces.

14 Chambers, History of Louisiana, I, 78. For further information on the intrigues of Cadillac in Louisiana, as well as on his relations with Crozat, the reader is referred to the excellent study by Jean Delanglez, "Cadillac's Last Years," Mid-America, XXXIII, January, 1951, 20-28.

15 Clark, Beginnings of Texas, 50. This refusal, coming as it did close upon the heels of the Assiento Treaty of March 26, 1713, might have been given to gratify the English. Cf. Ibid.
of Mexico. With luck, such commerce might even be condoned by New Spain's minor officialdom. If not, Spanish smugglers could be counted on to keep French merchandise flowing into Mexico and Spanish gold into Louisiana. To Cadillac, the price of helping the Spaniards establish a mission among the Hasinai was the least he could pay for such a golden opportunity. Then and there he laid plans for organizing an overland expedition to Mexico, "ostensibly for the purpose of going in search of Father Hidalgo and to secure some greatly needed cattle and horses for the colony of Louisiana." 16

To carry off this exceedingly delicate mission, Cadillac chose the Sieur Louis de Saint Denis, 17 explorer, fur trader, and the commander of Fort St. John at Biloxi, "a man of experience, shrewd, tactful, courageous, resourceful, and capable of dealing both with the natives and the Spaniards." 18 St. Denis had lived fourteen years in Louisiana. His excursions among the Indians had provided him with an adequate knowledge of several Indian languages and had so gained him their love and esteem as to be called

16 Castañeda, Our Catholic Heritage in Texas, II, 27.

17 For a discussion on the Sieur Louis de St. Denis of Texas history and the Sieur Louis Juchereau (Huchereau) de St. Denis, founder of Poste Juchereau on the Wabash River, see Edmond J. P. Schmitt, "Who was Juchereau de Saint Denis," SHQ, I, January, 1898, 204-215.

18 Castañeda, Our Catholic Heritage in Texas, II, 28.
The young commander (he was only thirty-four) was only too happy to lead the expedition. Furnished by Cadillac with ten thousand livres of merchandise from the public stores, he set out in September of 1713 from Mobile. With him he carried a patente or passport, signed by the governor, which read in part:

...[W]e grant permission to the Señor de San Denis and the twenty-four Canadians who are with him, to take at his choosing the number of Indians needed by him, in order to proceed to the Red River, where he is to look for the mission of Señor Francisco Hidalgo, religious of the Strict Observance, according to his letter written to us on January 17, 1711, in order to buy oxen, horses, and other cattle for the colony of the Province of Luisiana. We beg of everyone, that in order for him to accomplish this, they let the said St. Denis and his party pass through without putting any obstacle before them. (Dated September 12, 1713)

For obvious reasons, the patente in no way made any mention of securing a free trade agreement with Mexico. Cadillac had learned the futility of frankness from his Vera Cruz experience. But it is also evident that his designs went beyond the simple purchase of livestock. "The confessed motive was but a device to hide the ulterior motive, or rather, perhaps a feeler put out to try how much in the way of trade the Spaniards might be induced to grant." Of course, anything of interest that St. Denis might see along the way, such as the location of mines, would undoubtedly be included.


20 Provincias Internas, transcripts from the Archivo General of Mexico City, Vol. 181, Part One, 2.

21 Clark, Beginnings of Texas, 52.
in his report to the governor.

St. Denis and his party left Mobile, transporting their goods in five large canoes. After a brief stopover at Fort St. John, Biloxi, they continued on to Texas. There follows here an account of this journey in St. Denis's own words, just as he wrote it to Father Hidalgo.

... [Governor Cadillac] sent me, in the early part of September, with twenty-five men to go to the Azinais, which I did with as much haste as was possible for me. We arrived on the first of January, 1714, at the place where we knew that Your Reverence had established a mission and some years later had abandoned it. Because of the ill-humor of the men who were with me and also because of a great drought which had caused the Azinais to lose their entire crop of corn so that we were unable to obtain food, I resolved to return to the Nachitoches for the purpose of hunting supplies in order to come back immediately to look for the answer to a letter which the Azinais had promised me to carry to Your Reverence. Not finding the supplies in that nation, I was obliged to go still farther to the nation nearest the Río de la Palizada, which we call Tónica, where all my followers left me except seven, who did not want to abandon me, four of whom I had to leave among the Nachitoches. But, since I had promised the Governor not to return to Mobile without bearing news of Your Reverence or to perish on the way, I determined to keep the promise I had made to him. After securing supplies, I returned to the Azinais, where we did not find the answer to the letter we had left them, because they said that they were afraid of their enemies who were all along the road. Therefore, I resolved to come myself, not even wishing to return on any pretext without bearing news of Your Reverence.

One does not even have to read between the lines of this oversimplified account to reach the conclusion that St. Denis made this trip...

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22 The village of the Tónicas was situated eighty leagues down the Red River from Natchitoches and just two leagues from where this river joins the Mississippi.

23 St. Denis to Hidalgo, July 18, 1714, Bolton transcripts from the Archivo del Colegio, 15-18.
with the sole object of obtaining news of Father Hidalgo, even if only by letter. When the letter did not come, St. Denis seemed almost reluctantly to have decided to go on to the Río Grande. The good missionary must have been flattered—and St. Denis had won himself another friend among the Spaniards.

The young adventurer, too, could have developed a sincere admiration for this missionary whom he had never seen, because when the Hasinai learned of his intention to proceed to Mexico, "they charged him straitly to ask in their name that missionaries be sent to them, and among these the Padre Fray Francisco Hidalgo de la Cruz of Querétaro, and a Biscayan named Captain Urrutia, whom they had known since the establishment of the old, abandoned missions, [both of whom] were most acceptable to them." 24 Captain Bernardino and twenty-four of his tribe decided to accompany the French. They set out for the Río Grande on the first day of June. All went well until they reached the Río de San Marcos, where they had a brush with some Apaches, whom they defeated in a fierce fight. Here all but four of the Indians turned back. The little party of eight pushed on, living along the trail on what they could hunt, until arriving at the presidio of San Juan Bautista in the middle of July.

The news of the arrival of the French spread quickly through the presidio and its neighboring mission. When it was

understood that they had come in search of Hidalgo, carrying a letter he had written to them over three years before, no time was lost in informing the missionary at Querétaro of what had happened. Besides two letters dated July 18 and 20 from St. Denis himself, Hidalgo also received two from the Franciscans, one dated July 21 from Fray Alonso Gonzales, and the other from Fray Joseph Gonzales, and finally, one from the captain of the presidio, Diego Ramón. Hidalgo was probably overjoyed at the news. This was the answer to his letter which would prove to Spain that her province of Texas was indeed in jeopardy. Moreover, the proof consisted not merely in words written on a piece of paper, but in the tangible presence among them of four Frenchmen escorted by four Tejas Indians.

Two days after reaching San Juan Bautista, St. Denis wrote as follows to Father Hidalgo:

Thanks be to God, it has been a great pleasure for me to have arrived at your mission, which I did not think was also settled, and where I was embarrassed by the civility and honors which Don Diego Ramón, Captain of the place, and all the most Reverend Father missionaries here, and also all the people, showed towards me. My happiness would have been perfect if I had seen Your Reverence, for it will be a grief to me to have to go away without kissing your hand. It is that which makes me stay here gladly with the hope that Your Reverence will come here soon and will not be retarded, because for me, any delay whatsoever causes me much loss of fortune in consideration of the long time which it has been since I left my country, so much so, that if I had the necessary clothes, I would go myself to see Your Reverence, for whom I ask that our Lord keep you for many years.25

The letter of Fray Alonso Gonzales, written the next day, contained

the following items of news:

The Frenchmen came attracted by the news which they acquired from the letter which you sent them years ago by the Indian, Lázaro, and, desirous of knowing where the Spaniards of this country were, twenty-five Frenchmen set out (they say) from their towns . . . walking to the Tejas . . . . These, having arrived at the Tejas and asking them where the Spaniards were, they gave them information concerning the distance from there to these missions and the presidio, and the French, asking them if they wanted a mission to be established among them, they answered them that they were waiting for Padre Fray Francisco Hidalgo, the missionary who had been with them years before . . . . They say that on the Río de la Palizada and its confines they have six missions . . . and that from Mobile to Pensacola it is only twelve leagues, and that they are always trading with the Spaniards . . . . The Tejas Indians are clamoring for you and so I do not doubt that your joy will be according to your wishes, . . . and I hope that the Lord will permit me to see you in these countries in pursuit of an undertaking so pleasing to God and to you.26

The short note from the other Franciscan, Joseph Gonzales, must have warmed Hidalgo's apostolic heart, for by it he became the first to volunteer to accompany him back to Texas. Fray Joseph wrote:

Very Reverend and Most Beloved Father,

Greetings to you from the bottom of my heart, and I give infinite thanks to God, that the time has arrived when your apostolic desires may be fulfilled. If anything is put into motion, you have me here, Father, to accompany you (upon acquiring permission from our Father Guardian)27 even to the giving up of my life in this hemisphere. I accept everything, amen.28


27 The permission was not granted, for Fray Joseph's name does not appear on the list of those who made the entrada.

Captain Diego Ramón's letter to Hidalgo is of particular interest because it was written after that official had closely questioned the Frenchmen. It reads in part as follows:

I know well that it will be of the greatest pleasure for you to receive these lines as I inform you that there are four Frenchmen in this presidio, a Captain called Luís de San Dionisio and two named Pedro and Roberto Talon, who were among those rescued by General León. Neither the Captain nor his other companion speak Spanish. Fortunately, my cashier speaks French very well, through whom I have questioned them thoroughly, and I say that unless His Majesty orders the restoration of the missions and unless Spaniards are settled in the towns of the Naquitoies, the French will be the masters of all this land . . . . The four Tejas Indians are Bernardino for one, the other is Francisco, who speaks Spanish, the other is Captain Bossalon, and the other is the one who came to see you years ago. It seems to me that, God willing, your desires will be fulfilled and that I will have the pleasure of accompanying you. I ask you to recommend me to God and to that holy Colegio, that I carry off well the undertaking in which I am now engaged, according to the dispatches which I have received today from His Excellency, the Viceroy, concerning the uprising of the Indians of Nadadores . . . . Today I am going to Quagulla [Coahuila] where I have to carry out the orders of His Excellency concerning the supplies.

Here the French menace was definitely recognized as being real and imminent. As Hidalgo read these lines, he must have understood that the return to Texas was not far off.

Meanwhile, the captain, who would not permit St. Denis to go farther without the consent of the viceroy, found himself in

29 These two brothers were survivors of the ill-fated La Salle expedition whom De León ransomed from their Indian captors.

30 Ramón to Hidalgo, July 22, 1714, Archivo del Colegio, 15-16. This letter has been erroneously described in the folio as informing Hidalgo of Ramón's appointment to lead the entrada into Texas. The date of the letter shows this to be impossible. A correct translation also bears this out.
the rather awkward position of entertaining the guests until the
courier should return with instructions. According to Hidalgo's
chronicle, the account that Ramón gave the viceroy concerning the
arrival of St. Denis carried the impression that the priest had
asked the French for armed help. Hidalgo's letter was turned
over to the superior at Querétaro, who then passed it on to the
viceroy. After careful perusal, that official seemed to have been
convinced of the sincerity of intention with which Hidalgo had
written it, "all of which did not spare the venerable father from
many mortifications of spirit."33

Only after several months had passed did orders reach
Ramón granting St. Denis permission to proceed to Mexico City,
where he arrived on June 5, 1715. The viceroy, Duke of Linares,
having a natural affection for France, received him warmly, yet
cautiously, and promised to make a treaty of commerce as soon as
the Spaniards should be settled among the Hasinai. Here again,
as at San Juan Bautista, the Frenchmen were subjected to endless
questioning and were required to submit signed affidavits relative
to their journey and its motives, while the worried Spaniards
tried to decide what to make of the whole affair. St. Denis

31 St. Denis employed his time well by wooing and winning the captain's granddaughter, Manuela Sánchez.
32 "Auxilio de armas." Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 222
33 Ibid.
34 Le Page du Pratz, History of Louisiana, 7.
repeated over and over again that the sole purpose of their coming was to look for Father Hidalgo. The viceroy convoked the Junta General, which body, after much speculation on the French arrival, requested the Señor Fiscal to render his opinion on the matter and to make suggestions as to what action should be taken. The fiscal handed his opinion to the viceroy on August 15, in which was found the following recommendation:

Fifthly, that in order that similar entradas of the French be prevented, the fiscal considers it fitting and necessary that the great zeal of Your Excellency issue, as soon as possible, the decree necessary in order that Padre Olivarres, Fray Francisco Hidalgo, and one other religious pass over to the Province of the Tejas, escorted by twenty or twenty-five soldiers, and found a mission ... 37

Since the Indians had also asked for Captain Urrutia, the fiscal advised that he be sent along with the missionaries. One week later the Junta General met again to translate these suggestions into action. Because they dared not doubt the honesty of St. Deni, they submitted as gracefully as possible by "... concluding that his coming was in search of Father Francisco Hidalgo ... and to purchase oxen, horses, and other livestock for the French colony of Luisiana ... ." 38 They ordered missions to be established in

35 Provincias Internas, Tomo 181, Part One, 6.

36 This ministerial official, somewhat like an attorney-general, acted for the government by which he was appointed, and who, ex officio, personated the king.

37 Provincias Internas, Tomo 181, Part One, 13-14.

38 Ibid., 17.
Texas, a company of twenty-five soldiers to protect them, and named St. Denis comissary of supplies with a salary of five hundred pesos. The captaincy of the expedition was entrusted to Alférez Domingo Ramón, nephew of Diego Ramón. The stage was now set for Spain's second attempt to settle and hold her frontier province of Texas.

For Hidalgo it was a personal victory. During twenty-two years he had urged, entreated, and importuned the religious and civil authorities of Spain to restore the Texas missions. The appearance of St. Denis at the Río Grande was no accident, but the direct result of Hidalgo's letter to the French. This bold act of incursion, in its turn, produced the orders for the reestablishment of the missions among the Hasinai Confederacy. Hidalgo's return would be his triumphal march.

39 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 222.
CHAPTER VI

THE RETURN TO TEXAS

One day in December of the year 1715, the Reverend Father Guardian of the Colegio Apostólico de Querétaro, arose from his place in the refectory and addressed himself to the assembled religious, among whom were a number of new faces, for a group of young priests from Spain had recently joined the community. In his discourse, the superior proposed to them the coming entrada into Texas, and asked those who were interested to give him their names, so that from among them he might choose the most fitting. "Many were those who voluntarily offered themselves, but among the few who were chosen was the Reverend Father Fray Francisco Hidalgo, who, many years before had been Guardian of the Colegio, and who desired most the conversion of the Tejas."¹ The others named for the expedition were Fathers Gabriel de Vergara, Benito Sánchez, Manuel Castellanos, and Pedro Pérez de Mezquía.

Among the countless things to be done before the entrada could get under way was the gathering of supplies and equipment

¹ Espinosa, Chórónica Apostólica, 416.
for the missions, farms, and garrison. To form some idea of the careful planning that went into an expedition of this sort, it might be well to take note, for example, of just the equipment needed at each mission that was to be established. The list that follows was the one made up for this expedition.²

Six plowshares at five pesos each . . . . . . . . 30 pesos
Six mattocks at eighteen reales each. . . . . . . 13 pesos 4 ts
Six axes at twenty reales each. . . . . . . . . . . 15 pesos
Two adzes at three pesos each . . . . . . . . . . . . 6 pesos
Two saws, one large, one medium . . . . . . . . . . . 3 pesos
Four chisels of various sizes . . . . . . . . . . . . 6 pesos
Two hammers, one large, one small . . . . . . . . . 3 pesos
Sixty-two frames for adobe bricks
at five and a half reales each . . . . . . . . . . . . 55 pesos 1 ts
                                  134 pesos 5 ts

In addition to this, each of the four missions was to get three copper pots of different sizes, three saddles, and two saddle irons.³

For the missionaries who went on the expedition, the following items were provided:⁴

Four complete sets of vestments, one for each mission, which included amice, alb, cincture, chasuble, burse, pall, antependium, altar cloths, corporals, and purificators.
Four chalices with patens.
Four iron molds for making hosts.
Twelve candlesticks, three for each mission.
Four copper pots for holy water.
Four little bells.
Four towels.

² Provincias Internas, Tomo 181, Part One, 35.
³ Ibid., 39. Saddle irons were the pieces of iron which held the bows of the saddle together.
⁴ Ibid., 42.
Four manuals for the administration of the sacraments
Four surplices
Four arrobas\(^5\) of wax for candles to celebrate Mass
One barrel of Saltillo wine
Four loads of Saltillo flour
Some phials for carrying the holy oils.

The immense task of collecting these supplies was begun as early as September, 1715.

The expedition was scheduled to leave in the spring of the following year, the place of assembly to be the presidio of San Juan Bautista and its neighboring mission of San Bernardo. The Queretaran fathers left the Colegio on January 21, 1716, made a short stopover at Santa María de las Charcas, and arrived at Saltillo, where Captain Ramón had left an escort of six soldiers to bring them up with the main company. As Easter was approaching, the missionaries tarried at Boca de Leones to renew themselves spiritually in the solemn services of Holy Week.\(^6\) Hurrying on from here, they caught up with the main body of the expedition, which arrived at the presidio on April 18. It was probably on this occasion that Hidalgo and St. Denis came face to face with each other for the first time. They must have had a great deal to say to each other, and it is interesting to speculate what it was.

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\(^5\) The Spanish arroba is the equivalent of twenty-five pounds.

\(^6\) Espinosa, *Chrónica Apostólica*, 416-417. Fray Isidro Felis de Espinosa, the author of the *Chronica*, also joined the expedition at San Juan Bautista and was the designated superior of the Queretaran friars. "It seems that Olivares wished to go, but for some reason was not included." Cf. Morfi, *History of Texas*, Pt. 1, note 3, 229.
The next day was spent in collecting the last of the provisions and making a final check on personnel and equipment. It took all of the next day to put their thousand head of cattle, sheep, and goats across the Río Grande River. The entrada would have begun on the 21 of April had it not been for the delay caused by the illness of Fray Antonio Margil de Jesús, superior of the friars from the Colegio Apostólico of Zacatecas. Quite naturally, the three priests and three lay religious of his party did not want to go on without him. However, instead of improving, he grew steadily worse and, reluctantly, had to be left behind.

The day of departure was set for April 25. In the diary which he kept of the expedition, Father Espinosa recorded that memorable day as follows:

April 25 -- Saturday. Feast of St. Mark the Evangelist. Mass was sung at the Mission of San Bernardo; rogation prayers proper to the day recited, and a procession formed. These were offered for the success of our journey. At the conclusion of the ceremonies, all accompanied the priest who went to administer the Viaticum to our Rev. Father Margil. In the afternoon, the Fathers Fray Francisco Hidalgo, Fray Benito Sánchez, Fray Gabriel Vergara, and Fray Manuel Castellanos crossed to the other side of the Río Grande. Commenting on the Gospel of the day Designavit Dominus, "the Lord hath chosen," all gave thanks to His Divine Majesty for having chosen us for so glorious an enterprise. His command to His ministers in the persons of the Apostles: Ité, ecce ego mitto vos, "Go, behold I send you," gave new vigor to our souls. We traveled this day two leagues.

7 Fray Margil recovered quickly enough to catch up with the company soon afterward.

8 "Ramón Expedition: Espinosa’s Diary of 1716," trans. Rev. Gabriel Tous, Preliminary Studies of the Texas Catholic Historical Society, Austin, Texas, 1, April, 1930, 4-5.
The entire expedition consisted of sixty-five persons, including soldiers, nine priests, three lay brothers, and six women. Among the missionaries, "leading, one might say, the phalanx of gallant soldiers of Christ, was the now gray-haired Father Hidalgo, slightly bent by the inexorable passage of time, but still firm, his face beaming with joy at his return to the beloved Tejas."  

The party, being large and heavily equipped, perforce, had to travel slowly. The average distance covered each day generally varied from two to five leagues. Mass was not said every morning, and when it was, not all the priests celebrated. Since the undertaking was essentially religious, the priests took turns giving sermons to the group every third day. After making camp at night and again upon leaving in the morning, the religious sang the Alabado in metre, alternating in chorus.

Espinosa's diary of the expedition makes delightful reading. The account of the journey given here is taken from that valuable document. Two days after crossing the Río Grande, which "carried less water than at other times," a hurricane swept down upon them with such violence, says Espinosa, "that we raised our

9 Bolton, Spanish Borderlands, 225.

10 Castañeda, "Pioneers in Sackcloth," Preliminary Studies, III, October, 1939, 12. Hidalgo was fifty-seven when he made this entrada.

voices in supplication to the Mother of Sorrows and to the saints of our devotion. It uprooted the stakes of the tents to which we were clinging, and broke with a lively rain which, however, did not last long." Later came depressing heat followed by swarms of mosquitoes, which, "playing their little trumpets, entertained us both day and night to their heart's content." During the night some of their horses were stolen by Indians. Under the scorching sun they continued to push on into the interior. On May 5, its eleventh day out, the company halted to celebrate the marriage of an engaged couple. Beyond the Río Frío, they saw a flock of turkeys and managed to catch two of the birds. On May 11, they halted again "because of the intense heat of the sun, and because we had to carry a sick Religious." Two days later they suffered a serious loss while permitting their horses to bathe in the Medina River. "They got into such depth, and so much confusion followed that eighty-two of them were drowned, and we were left bewildered."

On May 14 they reached the San Antonio River, future site of several important Franciscan missions, concerning which the diarist wrote:

The [San Antonio] River is very desireable [for settlement] and favorable for its pleasantness, location, abundance of water, and multitude of fish. It is surrounded by very tall nopalz, poplars, elms, grapevines, black mulberry trees, laurels, strawberry vines, and genuine fan-palms... Merely in that part of the density of its grove which we penetrated, seven streams of water meet. Those, together with others concealed by the brushwood, form at a little distance its copious waters, which are clear, crystal, and sweet. In these are found catfish, sea fish, piltonte, catan, and alligators... This place mellowed the dismal remembrance of the preceding one. Its luxuriance is enticing for the founding
of missions and villages, for both its plains and its waters encourage settlement.

Three days after crossing the San Antonio River, St. Denis and Medar Jalot, accompanied by an Indian guide, left the party to look for the Tejas who were to come out and meet them. The next discomfort which the members of the entrada had to endure were ticks, which attached themselves to the skin. They crossed the Guadalupe River on May 19, noting that "fish and alligators are numerous." At a place called Bushy Creek they killed three bison, of which they ate heartily, but "some, not accustomed to this meat, indulged to excess, as may be supposed from the complaints made later of their stomachs." Soon fleas came to join the ticks with added misery for the body as the tired and dusty band plodded on.

On June 27, just over two months after leaving the Río Grande, news came that St. Denis was approaching with some Tejas Indians. About eight o'clock that morning, he strode into camp followed by thirty-four Indians, five of whom were chieftains. The Spaniards received them respectfully, the soldiers standing at attention in two files, the friars and the captain between them. The Indians, on foot and unarmed, approached the Spaniards and saluted them gravely. Then all repaired to a hut of boughs especially prepared for the reception, with blankets for carpeting and packsaddles for stools. The Indians seated themselves according to rank on one side, the Spaniards on the other. A peace pipe ornamented with white feathers was lit by an Indian page, and solemnly passed around for all in the assemblage to smoke. The
Spaniards reciprocated by serving chocolate. Then followed a discourse of welcome by one of the chiefs, translated by St. Denis.

The next day, nine leagues farther on, they were met by ninety-six more Indians, and a similar reception followed. That day being Sunday, there was veneration of the standards of Christ Crucified and of Our Lady of Guadalupe, with a procession and the singing of the Te Deum. Gifts were exchanged, the Indians giving corn, watermelons, tamales, beans cooked with corn and nuts, the Spaniards giving blankets, sombreros, tobacco, and flannel for under garments. A dance of celebration concluded the day's events.

By now, the expedition was well within the Tejas country. On June 30, Captain Ramón selected the site for a presidio and acceded to the wishes of the Indians as to the location of the first mission. By July 4 a crude shelter had been constructed for housing the missionaries. Then the supplies appertaining to each of the four missions were carefully distributed.

The next day, surely one of the happiest of his life, Father Hidalgo, the only one of the friars who more than twenty years ago had worked among the Tejas, was given solemn possession of the first mission. Espinosa's diary for that day reads:

Sunday -- July 5, 1716. The Captain named alcaldes, regidores, and an alguacil, and then came to give me, as President, possession of the mission in the name of His Majesty (may God keep him) at the spring of water, with the accustomed

12 This mission, bearing the same name as the first mission built by Massanet in 1690 was four leagues farther inland than formerly. Cf. Clark, Beginnings of Texas, 66.
ceremonies. I named as minister of the first mission, with the title of Nuestro Padre San Francisco de los Tejas, Reverend Father Fray Francisco Hidalgo, who for so many years had solicited this conversion, and I named as his companion Padre Predicador Fray Manuel Castellanos, to whom I entrusted the spiritual nourishment of the members of the presidio. The greater part of the clothes was given out, as well as other things we had for the Indians. Today our Captain left with the Padres Predicadores Fray Mathias Sans de San Antonio and Fray Pedro de Santa Maria y Mendoza in search of the place occupied by the Nacocdochi in order to put up the first mission of the Colegio de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de Zacatecas.13

The other three missions established by the Ramón expedition were: (1) Purísima Concepción, at a pueblo of the Hasinai, nine leagues northeast from San Francisco de los Tejas, (2) Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, in the village of the Nacogdoches, nine leagues southeast of Concepción, (3) San José [Joseph], among the Noaches, seven leagues northeast of Concepción.14

Once again restored to his mission among the Tejas, Father Hidalgo labored zealously in the apostolate he had so much desired. Before the rainy season set in, his temporary thatched structure had to be replaced with something more weatherproof. Then the Indians had to be located and convinced to move from their rancherías into a pueblo around the mission. Daily visits were made to their ranchos and lists of all the inmates were carefully drawn up. Instructions had to be given not only in the chapel but also in each dwelling. Usually the missionaries found the women

13 Provincias Internas, Tomo 181, Pt. 1, 119.
14 Clark, Beginnings of Texas, 67.
more docile to instruction than the men, who were more influenced by the tribal medicine men. With sickness a frequent visitor among the Indians, the fathers would learn the names of those who were stricken from their neighbors attending Mass, and would make it a point to visit them during the day.15

Unhappily, sickness did not always spare the missionaries. Both Hidalgo and Castellanos fell victims to what seemed to have been some form of malaria, as Hidalgo related in his first letter from the mission, written in October to Father Mesquía.

I wish to inform Your Reverence as to how Father Fray Manuel Castellanos and I are getting along as ministers in the first mission of San Francisco, I, as minister of the Indians, and Father Manuel as chaplain of the presidio, which is little more than a quarter of a league from the mission. Both of us have been sick. I was the first one, having fallen ill in the month of July, and I continued so until a few days ago. Thanks be to God, I am convalescing now and have the strength to enable me to labor again in the vineyard of the Lord. Father Fray Manuel got sick much later, and, God willing, he is feeling better already. They have been attacks of chills and fever.16

The priests had little success in congregating the Indians at first. Most of the tribes of the Hasinai Confederacy were out hunting or gathering their scattered crops when the missionaries arrived, and were too busy to congregate.17 Of the four tribes within his jurisdiction, Hidalgo admitted that "up to the

15 Shea, History of the Catholic Church, I, 485.
16 Hidalgo to Father Mesquía, October 6, 1716, Provincias Internas, Tomo 181, Pt. 1, 215.
17 Castañeda, Our Catholic Heritage, II, 68.
present time they have not been congregated. This will take a
great deal of work, but God will bring it about when a larger
force of soldiers arrives, there being a great lack of military
now, since some have fled and others are sick in bed."18

On the patronal feast of his mission, October 4, Hidal-
go celebrated High Mass for a "great crowd of men and women from
the neighboring settlements."19 Assisting him were Espinosa from
Concepción, Sánchez from San José, and Margil from Guadalupe.

Hidalgo's letter also informed Father Mesquía that, in
general, the missionaries were well received by the Indians, who
were idol-worshippers, having special houses of adoration and a
perpetual fire burning in the principal house of the idol. The
fact that some over-zealous Christian took away three of their
idols and burned the places of worship was suggested by Hidalgo
as another reason it was so difficult to conglomerate them.20

The settlements and activities of the French in the vi-
cinity of the missions were always of great concern to the fathers.
Any news on this subject, whether rumor or substantiated fact, re-
ceived careful consideration in their letters. This information
eventually found its way to the civil authorities in Mexico City,
who were thus able to keep posted on what was happening on the

18 Hidalgo to Mesquía, October 6, 1716, Provincias In-
ternas, Tomo 181, Pt. 1, 215.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
frontiers of Spain's most distant provinces. With the missionaries serving as listening reporters on the borderlands, the political significance of establishing far-flung missions becomes readily apparent. That the newly established missions in east Texas served just such a purpose is abundantly evident from Father Hidalgo's letters written at this time. His very first, composed just three months after arriving and addressed to his friend, Father Mesquia, is mostly taken up with the subject of the French.

The first interesting bit of news he had to relate was the discovery, by Captain Ramón, of the French post at Natchitoches on the Río de los Cadodachos, or Red River. Hidalgo wrote as follows:

There, among the Nachitos, are now two Frenchmen who have been settled on a little island of the river for three years. They have the Indians very submissive and they are waiting for a hundred soldiers, who will have to come to them from Mobile, in order to settle in force. Nevertheless, the Captain entered the settlement in force, bearing his staff of command and the royal insignia. He ordered the Frenchmen to put up a cross and then the Captain commanded them to have an altar erected and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was celebrated. He discussed with them that the right of settling was a matter for the crowns of Spain and France to determine.

Evidently the settlement or post referred to was the one built by St. Denis in the winter of 1713 while on his search for Hidalgo. It was here that he had built two storehouses for the ten thousand livres worth of merchandise that he had brought out of Mobile and which he had hoped to dispose of later among the Spaniards. St.

21 Ibid., 215-216.
Denia had conveniently forgotten to mention this trading post when he made his account of the journey to the Spanish government in Mexico.

Hidalgo expressed great concern "because this French nation is spreading far, and the number of Frenchmen is still greater farther within. It is necessary to find them out and to block them at the pass by the Missouri River . . . ."22 Displaying a somewhat faulty knowledge of geography, he said that he felt "most certain that the distance from the Río de los Cadodachos to the Missouri was little more than a hundred leagues, even though the Frenchmen at Natchitoches had tried to deceive Captain Domingo Ramón by telling him that it was three hundred leagues.23 The Missouri River, he wrote, is as big as the Mississippi into which it empties, and that it is between these two rivers that the French are settled. He had heard that the French Jesuits were intending to establish two missions on the upper Missouri, one in the Caynio nation, which had five thousand Indians, located one hundred leagues up-river, and the other in the Pani (Pawnee) nation, "fifty leagues farther up, where the three arms of the river join together to form this large river."24 He said that the French

22 Ibid., 216.
23 Ibid., 217. The actual distance between these two rivers is about four hundred miles, or two hundred land leagues.
24 Ibid.
carried on considerable trade with these nations by canoe, which was how the Indians acquired guns. The French had come upon "a great city of another people, very politic and well dressed" on the middle branch of the three rivers, and an expedition of 150 Frenchmen had left Mobile to examine it more closely at about the same time that St. Denis had left for Mexico in 1713. "In short," he concluded, "what has been said will be enough to convince our Great Monarch to look out for his kingdom." To make sure that the monarch would receive this threatening news, Hidalgo asked Father Mesquía to forward the letter to Father Diego de Salazar, who, in turn, was to pass it on to the viceroy.

The zealous missionary among the Tejas knew very well that a single warning would not disquiet a viceroy, so, one month later he composed another letter, this time addressed directly to that worthy representative of the king in New Spain, the Duque de Linares. This letter is truly a classic in the field of missionary accounts. Besides containing a veritable wealth of information on the missions, the Indians, their customs, way of life, the difficulties in converting them, the flora and fauna of the land, its minerals and soil, the possible industries that could flourish there, and the status of the French, it laid before the wondering eyes of the viceroy a grandiose and strategic master plan for obtaining permanent possession of the province of Texas, while at

25 Ibid., 218.
the same time outmaneuvering and effectively containing the French and finally squeezing them out of Louisiana altogether. A considerable portion of this very important document will be quoted here.

The letter is dated November 4, 1716 from Father Hidalgo’s mission of San Francisco de los Tejas. For the convenience of the reader, this long account has been divided and supplied with subtitles by the writer.

Motive for writing:

... because your predecessor, the most Excellent Viceroy, summoned me to that court to propose to me an expedition among the Tejas and to secure a report of the country and its divisions... His Excellency before mentioned ordered me to give him an account of the country and to inform him of everything. These, Excellent Sir, are the motives encouraging me to take my pen in hand and give you an account of the entire country...

Location of the missions:

On the northern border, reckoning from that court and looking in the direction above mentioned, the four missions for the different tribes are located. Beginning with the first mission, San Francisco de los Texas, some are on the north-northeast, that is, the first two. To the eastward of these, at a convenient distance, is another, while to the northeast is still another... This first mission of Nuestro Padre de San Francisco is in the thirty-third degree of north latitude in a due line to the northward, while Querétaro is directly toward the south. It is in degree twenty-two.

General description of the Tejas country:

There are many springs and rivers, large and small. The whole country, as far as it has been examined, is wooded. It contains many small open spaces, and stretches of sand and marshes where the Indians live. No places are found here suitable for gathering the Indians together to settle except

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by cutting and clearing away the timber. There are lagoons where different kinds of fish abound and also many rivers.

**Flora:**

The whole country is filled with different kinds of trees, oaks, chestnuts, pines, cottonwoods, medlars, cherries, and many other kinds of trees that I do not know the names of. The country contains wild grape vines, passion flowers of Peru, red and white mulberries, blackberry bushes of two kinds, and hemp and flax in certain sections. There is some in this first mission and along the road there are great quantities.

**Fauna:**

There are many wild chickens and deer and, in cold weather, many ducks and geese. There are buffaloes to the north and northwest, a little more than two days travel. These Indians then have their enemies in sight. Here there are extensive plains where every year the Assinai have wars with these Indians [Apaches] in order to secure meat and because of the ancient hostility between them.

**The Tejas Indians:**

This nation of the Assinai, whom we call "Tejas" or "Texias", contains many tribes. It extends as far as the Río del Misuri, according to reports of the Indians, from north and west . . . . This nation is good humored and joyous, with good features and thin faces. They are friendly to the Spaniards . . . . All these nations are closely united. They visit each other continually.

**Difficulty in congregating the Indians:**

We have not succeeded in getting them to put their houses close to the church, although they promised at first to do so. Therefore, there is no Christian doctrine imparted to them, first because of the great repugnance they have for Christianity, and, second, because of the great distance there is between their houses and because of other motives and reasons they have. Their repugnance to baptism from past times is well known, for they have formed the belief that the water kills them . . . . Because of the small force of the Spaniards, which the Indians know full well, it is not possible to consider the plan of locating them together in pueblos. The nature of the country does not favor this because of the woods and other conditions existing.
How the Indians live:

These Indians plant their ground in common, using wooden hoes. They greatly appreciate iron hoes. They build their houses by community labor and have axes of different kinds which they secure from the French. They plant tobacco. The women are all more intent upon work than the men. The most of the time the men spend in visiting and in planning their wars, which usually occur during the winter time. For the two functions mentioned above, the Indians choose a leader, but in all other matters they are their own bosses. They wear the scalps of their enemies at their belts as trophies and hang them from reeds at the entry to their doors as signs of triumph.

What the Indians raise and eat:

They plant corn, beans, and sunflowers of great size. The seed is like corn and this is what they eat in pottage which they make of corn and beans. There are calabashes, muskmelons, and watermelons. They gather great quantities of nuts in the hulls and acorns for a year's supply . . . . They keep their corn in lofts and garrets and in big reed baskets. They make large pots in which to keep water, make atole, and to preserve other things they need to carry. They make other jars for use.

Native products:

They make very curious rugs of reed of different colors which could be used in ladies' drawing rooms. They make very curious little mats of the same material and other articles of the same which serve as brushes to clean and sift their food.

Religious beliefs and practices of the Indians:

The whole nation is idolatrous—as is at present recognized. They are very perverted, and in the dances they have, the Indian braves and the Indian women get drunk on peyote or frixollillo, which they make for the occasion . . . . They have idols large and small. They believe in the devil and offer sacrifices to him believing that he is the true god. In the pictures they make of him they paint him with horns and a face of fire and with other features that prove their great deception . . . . They bury their dead, after bathing them, interring with them the trophies they have captured, with the deer skins they possess, and with all the gifts their relatives supply. They place there something of everything they have to eat, as well as buffalo hides. They bury
the scalps so that their enemies may go along to serve them in the other life. They place there provisions for the journey and other possessions to serve for clothing.

Livestock raising:

Because of the diseases which rage during the summer and because of the destruction of thieving dogs and gad flies, this is a poor country in which to raise small stock, like sheep and goats. Because of this all kind of stock died last season. To raise them now is very difficult. It is not possible to raise large herds of horses on account of the woods. The things that can be raised are small flocks of cattle, goats and horses.

Mineral wealth of the land:

The gifts which God has bestowed on this country encourages one still further in this undertaking, so that, in time, the country will pay for itself. It has been discovered by some of those who were in the last expedition who have a knowledge of metals that this whole region is a mineral district. No stones are known save those which contain metals, while all the streams flow out from metals. It has not been possible for us to verify this because we have been much hindered by sickness and other accidents that have occurred to cause delay in the matter. The Christian Indians who understand the Castillian language and the language spoken by the Indians of these regions will be useful for the founding of pueblos and the collection of Indians into groups. Spaniards who have experience in metals will be needed to work the mines.

Industries that could be developed:

Steps can be taken later to secure workers for the purpose of encouraging the growing of hemp. His Majesty can send from Spain those most useful. The same is true of the vine, in case Your Excellency and the superior government are favorable. I say the same thing concerning the development of the silk industry, for there are a great number of mulberry trees in this country.

The remaining one-third or more of Hidalgo's letter to the viceroy deals with the problem of the French encroachments and his strategy for blocking any further advancement on their part. As he saw it, the French were engaged in making a vast encircling
movement which would take them around Spain's northern frontier provinces and permit them to slip in behind New Mexico, Parral, and the Pacific Coast areas while Spain's back was turned. He was convinced that this was their intention from reports he had of French interest in the Missouri River. Since he believed that this river flowed from west to east into the Mississippi, more or less parallel with the Red River, and that it was as large as the Mississippi yet only about a hundred leagues north of the Red, his theory seemed entirely plausible.

Hidalgo knew that at the point where the Missouri entered the Mississippi, the French had a settlement and the Jesuit Fathers had two missions among the Illinois Indians. The greater part of the upper river had been explored and the French were carrying on extensive trade with the Caynigua and Panni Indians, whom Hidalgo said were "white Indians." This trade consisted in clothing, guns, trinkets, and many other things. According to his information, the Panni Indians had a pueblo one hundred and fifty leagues up the Missouri River from the Illinois missions, where the three arms of the stream united to form the main river. These Indians, whom the French considered theirs, formed a buffer against the Apaches, with whom they fought bitter wars. The Panni were considered even greater warriors than the Apaches, "and they have taken a great number of prisoners from them which they have sold to the French. The latter buy them and keep them as slaves."
"As in his previous letter to Father Mesquía, Hidalgo informed the viceroy about the rumors concerning a "large city" which was supposed to be located on the middle one of the three arms forming the Missouri. He said that the French had made several expeditions in search of it, but that he had heard that "they were finally lost."

I have heard that one hundred and fifty Frenchmen made an expedition two or three years ago, but I have no information of what happened to them. Indians do not live in this large city, but it is inhabited by white people. They must be either Tartars or Japanese from beyond the watershed which is near the South Sea.

He reminded the viceroy that from the summit of the range forming this watershed could be seen the South Sea on which were many vessels and that the "white people" whom the French were seeking were the same ones spoken of by Father Fray Juan Torquemada in his work entitled _Monarchía Indiana_. Hidalgo concluded his expose of French activities with this note of warning:

From all this information, Your Excellency can see in what a condition the French are placing us. They are slipping in behind our backs in silence, but God sees their intentions. All this, Most Excellent Sir, demands an extraordinary remedy and if it be possible—at the great expense of removing certain presidios from Viscaya—the great damage that is at our very doors should be repaired.

Being a man of foresight as well as action, this loyal missionary was not merely content to point out the French menace, but was ready with a proposal for removing it. His plan might be called one of encirclement and containment. But before this plan could be effectively carried out, he realized that Spain must secure a firmer foothold in the province of Texas. Her present
precarious position, represented by four struggling missions in east Texas must be abandoned for a resolute and concerted program of positive settlement and development by Spanish population. Of course, the establishment of missions and the conversion of the Indians would still continue, but in more suitable locations.

According to Hidalgo's plan, missions ought to be established on the plains "which lie a little more than two days travel to the northwest of this mission. Here, according to the reports of these Indians, I judge the Trinity River falls." The climate would be about the same, and the wide, open spaces would make it possible to raise large herds of horses and cattle, as well as provide adequate space for the collection of the Indians into large pueblos, which was impossible in the heavily wooded areas of the Hasinai country.

Next, steps should be taken to settle at the Bay of Espíritu Santo. Large settlements of Spaniards could be located, not on the bay itself, because of the unhealthiness of the place, the severe weather ("heavy sleets fall there in winter"), and the hostile Indians, but away from it, between the San Marcos and Espíritu Santo Rivers before they unite to enter the bay. Since he had explored this country himself, he knew that there were "open stretches and large plains and great conveniences for establishing large settlements of Spaniards." His explorations had revealed a large lagoon which he believed to be an outlet for the San Marcos River. From a nearby hill, called Cerrito Colorado,
he had seen "groves of trees and on the banks of the rivers . . . many kinds of wood for building. On the plains that are bounded by the lagoon it would be possible to locate the settlement." Speaking of the advantages of a Spanish settlement here, he wrote:

Here could be made the first settlement of the Spaniards as an opening for the commerce for the whole country and, at any rate, for the commerce with the Texas Country. On the whole, this settlement will be a good means for joining hands between the Texas Country and the frontiers along the Río del Norte where the presidios and missions are located. Through the port of Bahía, above mentioned, the work of settling the whole country can go forward with greater facility and His Majesty will be spared the heavy expense of transportation by land and the greater delays in sending of supplies. The port will also serve as a means of protection and of subjugating the Indians of the region. In this way peace will be established and the country pacified.

Hidalgo warned the viceroy, however, that the Tejas missions must not be abandoned as a preliminary to the settlement of the plains, for, he said, "the French will settle it for France as was proposed to your predecessor by the Frenchmen who were at that court." He pleaded for a quick end to the controversies about whether or not France had jurisdiction over the lands around the Red River because it flowed into the Mississippi. On this point he wrote:

... France could be dealt with with little effort, for the method they use in establishing and founding missions is very different from that used by our Spaniards. You would have relief from these embarrassments and controversies merely by seizing the post of Natchitoches . . . .

To complete the encirclement of the French, he urged the importance of exploring the mouth of the Missouri where the French settlements and missions were located. At a suitable place above
them, the Spaniards should "place a barrier against them so that they may not go farther up the river to discover the advantages of settling." Since the French lines of communication were altogether by rivers, Spanish barriers placed across the Missouri near the Illinois Indians, across the Red River at Natchitoches, and across the San Marcos at the Bay of Espíritu Santo, would mean that "the French will be encircled as they have encircled the English of New Carolina."

In his master plan of encirclement, Hidalgo did not underestimate the strategic importance of the Spanish settlement of Pensacola behind the French in Louisiana. He advised that "it is very necessary to hold that port and to fortify it still better with a fortress and wall, even though much royal treasure be expended therein." He wrote that even now the French were boasting that in case of war with Spain, they could seize it "with little effort." He reminded the viceroy how, during the past wars with England, Pensacola might even have been seized by the English had not the French settled at Mobile Bay to ward them off. He praised the port of Pensacola as "the best port that our Catholic Majesty has in the whole of the Indies," and as large enough to be a "stronghold for an armada." His estimate was in agreement with the opinion of those who had rediscovered Pensacola Bay in 1686, praising it as a most excellent and desirable port and far superior to the French port on Mobile Bay.

With his grandiose plan finally revealed to the amazed
viceroy, the missionary-turned-colonial-expert concluded his lengthy epistle with the following promise: "With all these precautions, His Majesty will be assured of a great kingdom in these vast regions which abound in riches."

Meanwhile, the patient labor of organizing and extending the missions of east Texas went steadily on. In January, 1717, Father Margil founded a fifth mission among the Ays Indians west of the Sabine River, giving it the name of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores. 27 In March of the same year he established another mission among the Adays, which he called San Miguel de Linares in honor of the viceroy. This was the farthest east of all the missions among the Hasinai, being located fifty leagues east of Dolores and only eight leagues west of the French post at Nachitoches. 28 The French, of course, interpreted this latest Spanish foundation as a move "whereby they confine us on the west within the neighborhood of the river St. Louis; and from that time it was not their fault that they had not cramped us to the north... 29

In 1717 some Indians informed Father Margil that the French were determined to colonize the lands of the Cadodachos, just fifty leagues distant from the Spanish missions. 30

27 Shea, History of the Catholic Church, I, 490.
28 Clark, Beginnings of Texas, 67. The present town of Robeline, Louisiana, is built on the site of this mission.
29 Le Page du Pratz, History of Louisiana, 8.
30 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 224.
What the missionaries intended to do to counteract this move is related by Father Espinosa:

... [A]nd in order to occupy the place before them, I determined to go to found a mission there, for which, very happily, the Reverend Padre Fray Francisco Hidalgo offered himself; and having prepared all that was necessary, and the horses being saddled in order to leave with the Captain of the presidio, the trip was frustrated; because the Texas Indians who were to serve us as guides, made a mockery of us, I don't know if for fear of the French or out of malice on their part.31

Actually, the French fort among the Cadodachos was not erected until two years later. What probably had aroused the fears of the missionaries was the settling of Yatase Indians among the Cadodachos and Natchitoches tribes in 1717 with French assistance. It was well known that the Yatase were the best friends the French had among the Indians.32

Difficulties and privations continued to dog the steps of the missionaries. Again, their lack of success in congregating the Indians into pueblos was most discouraging. Besides the reasons already mentioned for this failure, were added others in which the French were blamed, because, in their dealings with the Indians, they had made no attempt to moderate their licentiousness. Also, the only way in which the Indians could get the very desirable French guns, powder, and shot was by bringing in furs,

31 Espinosa, *Chronicas Apostolica*, 443.

so they were out hunting and trapping instead of being present in
the mission church for religious instruction. 33 The result was
that almost all the work of building and planting fell to the mis-
sionaries. When their corn crop failed, they had to live on herbs
and nuts which they gathered, supplemented now and then by an oc-
casional gift of meat from the Indians. 34 Indications of their
lack of adequate supplies can be found in such statements as this:
"We are in great need, although God does not fail to give us what
is necessary, or at least most necessary; in this struggle for the
above mentioned necessities, we are in God's hands until His Ex-
cellency finds a remedy for so great a calamity." 35 Writing to
the viceroy, Hidalgo said:

These Indians do not give us any help. They are content
merely to visit us. The lack of necessities we suffer from,
both food and assistance, we leave with God, Who has thus
decreed it. May all redound to the greatest glory of His
Majesty for whom we have suffered. 36

In justice to the viceroy, it must be said that he did
attempt to send relief. A supply train and additional mission-
aries set out for Texas, reaching the Trinity River in December,
1717, but it was so swollen by recent rains as to be impassable.

33 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 223.

34 Shea, History of the Catholic Church, I, 491.

35 Hidalgo to Mesquía, October 6, 1716, Provincias In-
ternas, Tomo 181, Pt. 1, 216.

36 Hidalgo to the viceroy, November 4, 1716, trans.
Hatcher, "Descriptions of the Tejas or Asinai Indians," SHQ, XXXI,
61-62.
A cache was made nearby, and letters were dispatched to the Tejas missionaries by Indian hunters, with information for locating it. Unfortunately, it was not until the following July that news of the cache reached the suffering missionaries. The recovery of its contents put an end to their two years' "starving time".

In spite of these hardships, the missionaries, and especially Hidalgo who knew the most common language of the Tejas fairly well, continued to visit the scattered Indian rancherías to console the sick and to instruct them for baptism, and, above all, to baptize the infant victims of the almost yearly epidemics. A few notable conversions were made, of which the two most outstanding were, the great chief of the Hasinai Indians, and the medicine man, Sata Yaexa. Father Espinosa baptized the chieftant on his sick bed. During the few days that remained of his life, he exhorted his tribesmen to heed the instructions of the padres. The converted medicine man and keeper of the sacred fire, now openly admitted the deceits he had been practicing on his fellow countrymen.

Although no formal settlements were begun in Texas, as Hidalgo had urged, some Spaniards did come to settle around the presidios. The present city of Nacogdoches dates back to this early day. The missionaries were constantly asking that families

37 Shea, History of the Catholic Church, I, 491.
38 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 223-224.
of Spaniards settle in the area, not only to encourage the work of conversion, but also to convince the Indians of Spain's intention to remain permanently among them. One of Hidalgo's letters expressed this very point. To the guardian of the Colegio he wrote: "It is supposed that you already have the news of the needs we suffer here and also of the need for families in order that this work be encouraged and advanced." But there was one family in particular that Hidalgo insisted must be sent to settle at the missions, and that was the Frenchman St. Denis and his Spanish wife, Manuela. To understand the true significance of this pointed request, it will be necessary to digress a moment in order to trace the movements of this clever adventurer from the time that he left the Ramón expedition to return to Louisiana.

After accompanying the expedition to the Hasinai country and helping the Franciscans establish their missions, Louis de St. Denis, having fulfilled his bargain with the viceroy, returned to Mobile and reported all that had transpired to Governor Cadillac. Upon learning of Viceroy Linarez's affection for the French and his promise to make a treaty of commerce with Louisiana, the governor agreed that St. Denis should return immediately to Mexico, this time transporting a large quantity of goods for trading. However, when the impeunious Cadillac sought to obtain the goods on credit from M. Crozat's storehouses, he met with a firm refusal.

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40 Hidalgo to Fray Joseph Diez, March 11, 1718, Provincias Internas, Tomo 181, Pt. 1, 244.
Cadillac and St. Denis had no other recourse but to form a trading company of the most responsible men in the colony, and to this company only would the agents of Crozat advance the goods. St. Denis realized that the members of the trading company would insist on accompanying the goods they were standing security for, and, therefore, might tip off the Spaniards to the fact that they were not his goods alone. If this happened, everything would be confiscated by the Spanish authorities, since commerce between the two nations was not legally open. Cadillac, too, saw the risk, but realized that he had to take it.

With sixty thousand livres of goods, St. Denis and his company set out from Mobile on August 13, 1716. After wintering among the Hasinai, whom they left on March 19, 1717, they eventually arrived at the presidio of San Juan Bautista, where St. Denis declared all the goods to be his personal property. In order to secure the good will of the border officials, he made gifts to them, with a free and generous hand, of part of his merchandise. This so aroused the avarice of his companions, that the Spaniards became suspicious and impounded the goods at the presidio until such time as their ownership could be determined. St. Denis, then, hastened on to Mexico City, arriving on May 14, 1717, only to find the Duke of Linarez on his deathbed. St. Denis was permitted to see the dying man, who recommended him to his successor, the Marquis

of Valero, but to little avail, since he was "a man as much against the French as the Duke was for them." 42

It soon became apparent to St. Denis that the new viceroy would never become party to a treaty of commerce with the French in Louisiana, so he turned his attention to the pressing problem of recovering his goods. Then, one day, he was suddenly placed under arrest and locked in jail. How this came about is explained as follows:

F. Olivarez, who, on the representation of F. Ydalgo, as a person of a jealous, turbulent, and dangerous disposition, had been excluded from the mission to the Assinais, being then in the court of the Viceroy, saw with an evil eye the person who has settled F. Ydalgo in that mission, and resolved to be avenged on him for the vexation caused by that disappointment. He joined himself to an officer, named Don Martín de Alarcón, a person peculiarly protected by the Marquis of Balero; and they succeeded so well with that nobleman, that in the time M. de St. Denis least expected, he found himself arrested, and clapt in a dungeon; from which he was not discharged till December 20 of this year, by an order of the Sovereign Council of Mexico, to which he found means to present several petitions. The Viceroy, constrained to enlarge him, allowed the town for his place of confinement. 43

Perhaps this contains the explanation of why Father Olivares, who was named by the fiscal along with Hidalgo to go on the Ramón expedition in 1716, did not make the entrada. St. Denis's peculiar influence over Linarez could have effected the exclusion of Olivares from the missionary personnel. Since Hidalgo and St. Denis did not meet until the entrada was under way, only their letters

42 Ibid., 9.
43 Ibid., 9-10.
could answer this question. Was this Hidalgo's "revenge" for having been refused permission by Olivares, who was then the guardian, to pass over into Texas in 1708, and for not having been invited to make the Olivares-Espinosa entrada in 1709?

St. Denis again tried to obtain possession of his merchandise, which had been sent under guard by Captain Diego Ramón to Mexico City, where it was being held as contraband by the above-mentioned Martín de Alarcón, until the Frenchman could pay the exhorbitant fee for permission to dispose of it. Even then, the small profit from the sale of his pillaged and damaged wares was just sufficient to defray the expenses he had incurred in presenting his suit before the Junta General to obtain his release from imprisonment.44 Fearing still further misfortunes from the hostile authorities in the capital, St. Denis slipped out of the city on the night of September 25, 1718, stole a horse from some lone rider, and, traveling by night and resting by day, he reached the presidio of San Juan Bautista. From here he continued on foot to Louisiana, reaching the French colony on April 2, 1719.45 Profound changes had occurred since he had left two years before. Cadillac had been recalled to France and Bienville was governor. Crozat's trade monopoly had been transferred to the West India Company. The capital of the colony was no longer at Mobile, but at New

44 Ibid., 10.
45 Ibid.
Orleans. After making his report to the new governor, St. Denis retired to his own settlement. 46

When Hidalgo wrote to Father Guardian Joseph Díez asking that St. Denis be sent to the missions, he must have known that the Frenchman was being held prisoner or was, at least, in protective custody in Mexico City. News of his arrest would surely have reached the priest, especially in view of their previous relationship. Since his letter was dated March 11, 1718, he may have known that St. Denis was out of jail, but still confined within the city, unable to get a permit to leave. If that were the case, Hidalgo's suggestion might be just the thing to effect his release. Naturally, the shrewd priest would not reveal his real designs in asking for St. Denis. His motive would be a most laudable one, that of helping the missions. This is how he put it:

I cannot desist from putting before your consideration a point which is more important than anything in order that you give it the consideration which you think necessary according to God. This is, that this whole people, as well as the rest of the nations up to the Río Grande, are clamoring for the French Captain, D. Luis de S. Dionisio, because of the great love which they have for him and because he promised the Indians of the Camino del Río Grande that he would put them into missions, or at least try to. He already gave them his word that he would come with his wife to live among them when the Spaniards would come; and the Indians promised him that they would congregate into towns when he would come with his family. This is the point. I am certain that if that gentleman does not come sent by His Excellency, with whatever title, these Indians are not going to be congregated except at the cost of many years, of many Spaniards, and at great expense, and what is more, at the cost of many souls which will be lost and could have been saved if they were congregated,

46 Ibid., 10-11.
because many are dying to us without baptism.47

Certainly Hidalgo's appeal could hardly have been more forceful. St. Denis's presence among the Indians would insure the success of the missions.

Due to the heavy rains which made travelling impossible, the post had already been detained at the mission of San Francisco for fifty-six days. Taking advantage of this delay in the mails, Hidalgo decided to write another letter, again asking for St. Denis, this time to the viceroy. He repeated the idea that the Frenchman's presence would solve the problem of getting the Indians to gather into pueblos, and then added some reasons why there should be no objection to permitting him to come. Under date of April 18, 1718, Hidalgo wrote, in part, to His Excellency as follows:

The business of congregating this people is so necessary that without it cannot be accomplished the principal end for which Your Excellency, in the name of His Majesty, sent us, which is to plant the holy faith in this heathen land. This business of congregating the Indians is above all the greatest need. The most effective and quickest method of accomplishing this will be for Your Excellency to send to this province, with whatever title, Captain D. Luis de S. Dionisio, the Frenchman, for whom these Indians have a special affection and because they promised him to congregate when he would come with his wife. I find no difficulty in this, because he is a man of good blood, a vassal of our King, to whom he is devoted, he is married to a Spanish woman, and is abhorrent of all trade.48

47 Hidalgo to Diez, March 11, 1718, Provincias Internas, Tomo 181, Pt. 1, 244-245.

48 Hidalgo to the viceroy, April 18, 1718, ibid., 231.
The very fact that Hidalgo should go out of his way to mention that St. Denis was "devoted" to the king, practically a Spaniard by marriage, and especially that he was "abhorrent of all trade" seems indication enough that he knew his friend was in trouble, and also, possibly, who had caused it. Five months after this letter was written, St. Denis made his escape.

Sometime during the year 1717, the Marquis de Valero, then viceroy, gave orders for the formation of two Spanish settlements in Texas, one of these to be on the San Antonio River, the other either at Espíritu Santo Bay or in the Nasinaí country. The man entrusted with this task was Don Martín de Alarcón, who was given the title of lieutenant general of the provinces of Texas and Nuevas Filipinas. Because of the usual interminable delays consequent to an expedition of this nature, Alarcón did not get started until the following year. By this time, the impatient Father Olivares had already transferred the Indians and belongings of the San Francisco Solano Mission to the banks of the San Antonio. When Alarcón arrived, he established his settlers at Villa de Bejar and christened Olivares's mission San Antonio de Valero in honor of his superior. The villa was to develop into the present city of San Antonio, and the founding of other flourishing missions in the area was to mark this settlement as the

49 Shea, History of the Catholic Church, I, 491.
50 Clark, Beginnings of Texas, 78.
real beginning of Spain's permanent occupation of Texas. 51

Seeing that the new governor had no intention of advancing beyond the San Antonio River, the six Franciscans in east Texas held a conference in which they delegated Fathers Espinosa and Sans to journey to Mexico City in order to lay their problems before the viceroy. On the way they met Alarcón, who was proceeding to Espíritu Santo Bay. Espinosa joined him and convinced him to visit the Hasinai missions, while Father Sans continued on to the capital. 52 The governor arrived at Hidalgo's mission on Friday, October 14, 1718. The diary of the expedition, kept by Fray Francisco Céliz, records their welcome to east Texas:

After crossing a somewhat swollen creek which is permanent [Neches], and travelling through clearings and much reed-grass and open woods, we came upon the mission of Our Father Francisco, where the governor was received with great joy and ringing of bells by the father missionaries and by the Indians of that tribe with gifts of their usual food. The said governor regaled the Indians and explained to them the purpose of his coming and desire of our Catholic king and lord for the conversion of their souls. [He told them] that he wanted them all to congregate in order that they might live in a civil community. This they promised to do but [the plan] could not be executed, because the Indians were about to go in search of bison meat, the crop having been short this year. The governor gave this mission the name of Pueblo de San Francisco de Balero. It now remains with two religious of the college of Santa Cruz. The Christians who have been baptized in danger of death are twenty. Here Friday was spent after we had traveled twelve leagues. 53

51 Ibid., 78-87.
52 Shea, History of the Catholic Church, I, 493.
53 Fray Francisco Céliz, Diary of the Alarcón Expedition into Texas, 1718-1719, trans. Fritz Leo Hoffmann, Quivira Society, Los Angeles, 1935, 73.
The twenty Christian baptisms recorded is indeed a sad commentary on the slow progress of the mission. Presumably there was a much greater number of unrecorded infant baptisms. The use of the term "Christian" baptisms leads one to believe that they were of adult Indians under instruction at the time of their sickness.

Beyond providing a little excitement and making an inspection of the mission records, Alarcón's visitation seems to have been devoid of any tangible results for the relief of the missions. Meanwhile, Father Mathías Sans was in Mexico urging the necessity of active steps by the government to stop the flow of French guns into the hands of the Indians. If war ever came, France and her Indian allies would soon be masters of the whole territory.54 Yet, Spain continued to do nothing. It seemed like a repetition of the 1693 fiasco, with France replacing the Indians in the principal role of villain.

54 Shea, History of the Catholic Church, I, 493.
CHAPTER VII

"IF SPAIN'S DESIGNS HAD BEEN ALLIED WITH MINE . . ."

It was with a great deal of anxiety that Father Hidalgo witnessed France's growing strength in the vicinity of the Tejas missions. He had only to contrast the two French forts, one at Cadodachos consisting of a hundred men with ample supplies of war, the other at Natchitoches hourly expecting a contingent of soldiers, with the Spanish presidio of less than twenty men to protect the missions, in order to feel obliged to take up his pen once more in an effort to stir up the authorities in defense of the missions and in the preservation of so rich a province. Among the letters that flowed from his pen at this time to influential and powerful persons, one of the most unusual was addressed to the viceroy. After asking his pardon for writing again, he begs his indulgence to hear him out in respect for his gray hairs and long years of experience. He dared not pass over this matter in silence, he said, so that the viceroy, being thoroughly informed of the situation, would condescend to take the measures he was about to suggest.

1 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 224.
2 Hidalgo to the viceroy, undated, Archivo del Colegio, 36-37.
In order that the king of Spain be master of a great kingdom, he wrote, "four large presidios are necessary, which should be of two hundred men each." The first should be at the Bahía del Espíritu Santo, the second among the Tejas, the third at Natchitoches, and the fourth next to the French settlement among the Illinois Indians.

These last two presidios should be made up of foot soldiers, the first and principal reason being that it takes away from the Captains the opportunity of entering on horses and mules among the French. The second reason is because the land does not permit horses, being extremely full of woods.

The first two presidios should have mounted troops.

Hidalgo knew that when he was asking for eight hundred men he was asking for a great deal, and that the viceroy would encounter considerable difficulty in carrying out such a major undertaking. He had a ready answer for that too.

... and I judge that they will be inclined to dissuade you from all of it, but they have their eyes closed to what is contained in all this land. ... And the gentlemen of trade especially will be most opposed, in order that their trade in that city and kingdom be not lost. But if Your Excellency does not establish these four presidios with the soldiers mentioned, not only will be lost the richest kingdom that His Majesty could possess in America, but also the French will then make themselves masters of it. They would open up a trade along all the frontiers as great as that in Reyno de León, Viscaya, and Sonora, which even all the power of Nueva España could not take away. This I say, and the consequences are irrefutable.

The problem of contraband and smuggling must have been considerable along the frontiers, for Hidalgo stipulated that the

3 This might refer to warlike acts of aggression, or, more probably, dealing in illicit trade.
captains of the four presidios must be "God-fearing" men so that trading would be reduced to a minimum, or at least be "much moderated."

Unlike that other great missionary, Father Massanet, Hidalgo had become convinced that the presence of a strong garrison among the Indians aided in their congregating, "because that is what these people need, for they know no better either from the good done to them, or by gifts, or by counsels, but they know and recognize only the force of arms." Such an admission on the part of a gentle missionary was indeed a departure from the true spirit of the apostolate. His letter also requested "that the captains and soldiers be commanded, under grave penalties, not to give powder to the Indians, nor to let the French give it to them, because they have many French guns, and by giving them the powder, we have against us still more enemies." A postscript added that "it is very important that the captainships be for life."

Notwithstanding Hidalgo's repeated warnings, the fateful year 1719 dawned without any efforts being made to fortify the east Texas missions. He must have seen the handwriting on the wall, for, in what was possibly the last letter he was ever to write from his San Francisco Mission, he penned this sad lament:

Aquí pudiera referir a V. S. cuantas diligencias me ha costado esta conquista: más de veinte y cinco años me ha costado de solicitud, y si hubieran estado confederados los designios de los Españoles con los míos, ya toda la tierra
He was right. The conquest of the Tejas had cost him much. Their conversion had been his chief anxiety for more than twenty-five years. No single Spanish missionary had done more than he had for them. If Spain had heeded his advice, the land would long since have been conquered. It had been a lifelong sorrow for him to see the efforts of so many years frustrated by Spanish apathy.

The storm broke in June, 1719, when Spain and France went to war. The Tejas missionaries first learned that their country was at war when the French commander at Natchitoches, Blondel by name, attacked and plundered the nearby mission of San Miguel de los Adaes. The word "attacked" is used loosely here, because there were only one soldier and a lay brother to defend it, both of whom were taken prisoner. As Blondel was making off through the forest with the sacred vestments, utensils, and decorations of the church, the flock of chickens he had also confiscated made such a noisy disturbance that Blondel's frightened horse threw him heavily to the ground. As the soldiers scurried to assist their fallen commander, the alert lay brother darted into the woods and made his escape. Arriving in all haste at Margil's mission Concepción, he related what had happened, informing him that a force of one hundred men was on its way to Natchitoches with the purpose of seizing the rest of the missions.

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4 Quoted in Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 224.
Terror resulted as the news of the French attack spread from mission to mission. The captain of the presidio at Dolores, abetted by the eight hysterical women there, wanted to flee immediately. A conference was held at Concepción in which most of the friars advised awaiting further developments, but the soldiers, their families, and some of the religious withdrew and set up a camp about half a league from Hidalgo's mission of San Francisco, this being the one most distant from the French. The Indians followed the Spaniards as far as the first mission, begging the priests not to forsake them. In order to quiet them, Espinosa and Margil returned to Concepción, after an agreement was reached that the rest of the company should set up a camp no farther westward than the last ranchos of the Tejas. The two Franciscan presidents stayed on at Concepción for twenty days and then joined the others who had already withdrawn beyond the specified place.

Here, west of the Trinity River, the retreating Spaniards stayed for three months, awaiting reinforcements. During this time they endured a hand-to-mouth existence, irregularly supplied with meat, lacking sufficient flour, and totally without salt. Finally, despairing of outside help, they continued their retreat westward, arriving at San Antonio de Valero in late September or early October. As there were not sufficient living quarters to

5 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 224-225.

6 Buckley, "The Aguayo Expedition into Texas and Louisiana," SHQ, July, 1911, XV, 10-14.
accommodate them, each religious had to construct his own thatched hut. Here they remained until March, 1721, when the Marqués de Aguayo entered Texas with a large force of mounted troops and re-instated the Franciscans in their eastern missions.7

There is no document which states that Father Hidalgo accompanied Aguayo on his expedition to restore the Tejas missions to Spain. Therefore, it is reasonable to presume that he did not, because his name is not listed among the Queretaran Franciscans who made the expedition. Further proof of his absence is furnished by the fact that when Aguayo took possession of the mission of San Francisco de los Tejas on August 5, 1721, President Espinosa left Father Joseph Guerra in charge. Had Hidalgo been in the company, it would most surely have been reentrusted to the care of its former custodian. Perhaps, in view of his age (he was now sixty-two), his superiors had seen fit to relieve him from the arduous labors of his old mission. In any case, there was always work to be done at San Antonio.

It was around this time that the settlements in the San Antonio valley were being subjected to periodic raids by hostile Apaches, who, after being defeated by the Comanches, had retreated southward to take up their abode in the region between the upper Colorado and Brazos Rivers. Although still at least one hundred and thirty leagues northwest of San Antonio, the Apaches were

7 Ibid., 19-20; Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 225.
accustomed to move their camps southward during the buffalo season, thus coming into contact with the Spanish settlements, which appeared to be easy prey for their swift horses and iron-tipped arrows. Roving bands of from sixty to one hundred Apaches would make surprise attacks on the unsuspecting settlements, seizing what booty they could and causing considerable damage to life and property. To travel near the Apachería without military protection was to invite capture or death. Although their horses were protected by buffalo skins and their own bodies by skin armor, the Spaniards had one advantage over them and that was firearms. Captain Flores, commandant of the presidio, adopted the policy of armed reprisal against the attackers, to the extent of waging a campaign against them in their home territory. This only caused more bloodshed and served to increase the hostility of the Indians toward the white settlers.

The missionaries, led by Father Joseph Gonzales and seconded by Hidalgo, protested vigorously against the policy of the military in regard to the Apaches. Their protests eventually reached the ear of the viceroy, who soon gave orders that a more conciliatory attitude be adopted by the military. In a letter to

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9 Joseph Pita, Franciscan lay brother, was killed by the Apaches when a small party of Spaniards was ambushed about sixty miles from the San Xavier River. He was the first Spanish religious to die by their hands in the province of Texas. Cf. Shea, History of the Catholic Church, 495.
the viceroy, dated January 14, 1724, Hidalgo expressed the opinion that the Apaches could have been converted long ago if the presidios had been managed properly. The low class of Spaniard which usually made up the soldiery were vicious men of evil habits, interested only in killing. As for the captain of the presidio, how could he say that he desired peace since he did not release the Apache women and children he held captive? 10

The very suspicion engendered by the military policy made it almost impossible to treat with the Indians of peace. When, through the capture of an Apache warrior, the captain induced four of them to come to the presidio, they seemed friendly enough and willing to talk peace, but still there was no guarantee that the word of these few would mean an end to all hostilities. 11 Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that the fathers succeeded in having Captain Flores relieved of his command, there seemed to be no way in which to bring about peace. Reports of the killing of Christian Indians continued to reach the missions. As for their conversion, no missionary would dare to venture among them without a soldier escort.

10 Dunn, "Apache Relations in Texas," SHQ, XIV, 213. In a retaliatory attack on an Apache ranchería in 1723, Flores had killed thirty-four and taken twenty women and children captive. His reason for holding them was to negotiate a peace treaty in exchange for their release. Hidalgo apparently could not see the logic in this. Cf. Ibid., 207-209.

11 Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica, 225.
Finally, the aged Hidalgo resolved to bring about what force could not. In a petition dated March 20, 1725, he humbly requested permission of the Father President Gabriel de Vergara to go unescorted to the Apachería, accompanied only by the lay brother, Francisco Bustamente, in order to arrange a peace with them and to try to convert them. Father Vergara replied that he recognized Hidalgo's zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, even to the extent of offering his life, but, the petition being an extraordinary one, it was not within his power to grant, and would have to be turned over to the guardian of the Colegio. This superior, of course, refused to give the permission, because, as he said, "it is the Guardian's duty to protect his missionaries, not send them to their death." As one historian remarked: "What he might have accomplished single-handed is doubtful, but it is safe to conclude that had he failed in the attempt, his failure, nevertheless, would have stimulated the authorities to give the new plan a more thorough trial."  

Whether from disappointment, sickness, or old age, the venerable Father Hidalgo left San Antonio the following year and retired to the mission of San Juan Bautista. There, south of the Río Grande in the mission he had helped to found and whose minister

12 Ibid., 226.
13 Ibid.
he had been for many years, death called him in the month of September, 1726, at the age of sixty-seven. This pioneer missionary in Texas had been a Franciscan for fifty-two years, of which forty-three were spent in New Spain as an apostolic missionary.\textsuperscript{15}

The laconic memorial inscribed behind his name in the annals of the Franciscan Order in Spain might well be his most fitting epitaph: "He was a religious totally simple, and very zealous for the conversion of the infidels, among whom he spent most of his life."\textsuperscript{16} Thus did Fray Francisco Hidalgo, devoted missionary, passionately loyal Spaniard, and Texas pioneer, whose enigmatic, controversial, and highly colorful figure literally strode across the plateaus of Mexico and the plains of Texas for nearly half a century, slip quietly and almost unnoted from the pages of history.

\textsuperscript{15} Arricivita, \textit{Crónica Seráfica}, 226.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 206.
CRITICAL ESSAY ON AUTHORITIES

I. UNPUBLISHED COLLECTIONS OF DOCUMENTS

One of the most pertinent collections of documents to be used by the author of this dissertation was a folio entitled "The Work of Fray Francisco Hidalgo among the Texas Indians, 1705-1716", containing letters written by Hidalgo or to him relative to the Texas missions. They were gathered by Professor Bolton from the Archivo del Colegio de la Santa Cruz de Querétaro, Mexico. The copy used by the writer at the library of the University of Texas is a photostat from the Bolton transcripts in the Library of Congress.

Also of great value as source material for this study were the Provincias Internas containing transcripts from the Archivo General in Mexico City. Of the thirty volumes of documents on the early history of Texas, Coahuila, and approaches thereto comprising this collection, the author found Tomo 181 to be of most use for his subject. These transcripts were made by Professor Hackett and are available at the University of Texas.

Another important collection of documents consulted was the San Francisco el Grande Archive, thirty-six volumes, being a photostat of manuscripts for the history of Texas and internal provinces, selected and calendared from the Archivo de San Francisco el Grande by Carlos E. Castañeda and located at Texas University. The faded condition of many of these documents makes their reading extremely difficult and greatly impairs their value to the researcher. Of this collection, Volume VIII proved to be of most help to the author.

II. PUBLISHED WORKS

The single published work of most value to the writer of this dissertation was Juan Domingo Arricivita, Crónica Seráfica y Apostólica del Colegio de Propaganda Fide de la Santa Cruz de Querétaro en la Nueva España, Segunda Parte, Mexico, 1792. Arricivita was the official chronicler of the Colegio and his work contains biographical sketches of its more important missionaries. His twenty-page biography of Fray Francisco Hidalgo laid the ground plan for this dissertation. Although written according to
the eulogistic principles of eighteenth century hagiography, the chronicler had access to the original documents and therefore can be trusted as to the accuracy of his account. His work also contains a valuable sixty-five page history of the Texas missions.

Arricivita's Crónica Seráfica is a continuation of Fray Isidro Felis de Espinosa, Crónica Apostólica y Seráfica de todos los Colegios de Propaganda Fide de esta Nueva España, de Missionarios Franciscanos Observantes, Primera Parte, Mexico, 1746. This work is really a primary source for this dissertation because Fray Espinosa was Hidalgo's superior when the Querétaro missionaries returned to Texas with Captain Domingo Ramón in 1716. Espinosa's chronicle devotes eighty-two pages to the history of the missions on the Rio Grande and in Texas.

Other Spanish sources consulted by the author were: Padre Andrés Cavo, Los Tres Siglos de Mexico Durante El Gobierno Español, Hasta La Entrada Del Ejército Trigarante, Mexico, 1836, of little value for the Texas missions, being a year by year tabulation of events that occurred in Mexico, particularly in Mexico City; Esteban L. Portillo, Apuntes para la Historia Antigua de Coahuila y Texas, Saltillo, 1880, useful for documents quoted and especially for the brief but informative accounts of the various missions founded in Coahuila and Texas; Vito Alessio Robles, Coahuila y Texas en la Época Colonial, Mexico, D.F., 1938, a scientific and well-documented work; and Joseph Antonio de Villa-Señor y Sánchez, Teatro Americano, 2 vols., Mexico, 1748, which was of very little help since it is descriptive and geographical rather than historical.

Among the translated works used by the author was that of Fray Juan Morfi, History of Texas, 1673-1779, translated, with biographical introduction and annotations, by Carlos Eduardo Castañeda, in two parts, the Quivira Society, Alburquerque, 1935. It is a basic work of prime importance for the first hundred years of Texas history. For the French side of the St. Denis story there is M. Le Page du Pratz, The History of Louisiana, or of the Western Parts of Virginia and Carolina, translated from the French and first published in London in 1774, reedited by Stanley Cisby Arthur and republished by the Pelican Press in New Orleans in 1947. An important diary for this dissertation was that of Fray Francisco Céliz, Diary of the Alarcón Expedition into Texas, 1718-1719, translated by Fritz Leo Hoffmann, the Quivira Society, Los Angeles, 1935.

Among the general histories which proved of value in this study was Carlos E. Castañeda, Our Catholic Heritage in Texas, 1519-1936, 7 volumes, Austin, Texas, 1936. Volumes II and III of this work deal with the mission area and are the most comprehensive on the subject to be found in any of the general works on Texas. The author conceived the idea of writing this dissertation from Professor Castañeda's excellent volumes on the Texas missions. Such standard works as Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of Texas and the North Mexican States, 2 vols., San Francisco, 1890, and his
Annals of Colonial Mexico, New York, n.d., were consulted. Volume I of John Gilmary Shea, History of the Catholic Church in the United States, 4 vols., Akron, Ohio, 1886, devotes thirty-one pages to the history of the Church in Texas, 1690-1763. His narrative is based on original sources and provided a valuable background for this study. More popular and less scientific histories used were Clarence R. Wharton, Texas Under Many Flags, 5 vols., Chicago, 1930, and Henry E. Chambers, A History of Louisiana, 3 vols., Chicago, 1925. Also of general importance for this study were the two works of Herbert E. Bolton, Spanish Explorations in the Southwest, 1542-1706, New York, 1915, containing a general documentary collection of the period, and The Spanish Borderlands, Vol. XXII of the Chronicles of America Series, ed. Allen Johnson, 50 vols., New Haven, 1921, with interestingly written chapters on Texas and Louisiana.

III. SPECIAL STUDIES AND PERIODICALS

From among the studies contained in the University of Texas Bulletin, the author of this dissertation made considerable use of Robert Carlton Clark, The Beginnings of Texas, 1684-1718, No. 98, Humanistic Series No. 5, December 1, 1907, Austin, Texas, and William Howard Dunn, Spanish and French Rivalry in the Gulf Region of the United States, 1678-1702, No. 1705, Studies in History No. 1, Austin, January 20, 1917. Both studies are quite detailed for the ground covered, the second being very adequately documented.

From the Preliminary Studies of the Texas Catholic Historical Society the writer found material in Carlos E. Castaneda, "Pioneers in Sackcloth", Austin, Texas, III, October 1939, 5-22; Mattie Austin Hatcher, "The Expedition of Don Domingo Terán de los Ríos into Texas", II, January, 1935, 44-67, containing a translation of the diary kept by the missionaries; Rev. Gabriel Tous, "The Ramón Expedition: Espinosa's Diary of 1716, 1, April, 1930, 4-24.


In the periodical field, Jean Delanglez, "Cadillac's Last Years," Mid-America, XXXIII, January, 1951, 3-42, proved to be a valuable source in estimating the character and role of that Frenchman during his term as governor of Louisiana. Also important to the writer were the valuable documents and monographs found in the Texas State Historical Association Quarterly, now the Southwestern
Historical Quarterly. The titles in the following listing speak for themselves:

Bolton, Herbert E., "The Native Tribes About the East Texas Missions," XI, April, 1908, 249-276.

Bolton, Herbert E., "Notes on Clark's 'The Beginnings of Texas'," XII, October, 1908, 148-158.


Hatcher, Mattie Austin, "Descriptions of the Tejas or Asinai Indians, 1691-1722," translations made of documents written by Fray Francisco Casañas de Jesús María, August 15, 1691; by Fray Francisco Hidalgo, November 4, 1716; and by Fray Isidro Felis de Espinosa, 1722; XXX, January, 1927, 206-218; XXX, April, 1927, 283-304; XXXI, July, 1927, 50-62; and XXXI, October, 1927, 150-180.


APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Brother Arnold A. Wursch, S.M. has been read and approved by three members of the Department of History.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

Jan. 12, 1954
Date

Signature of Adviser