

Joseph de Moraga Commissioned Lieutenant

Translation and Notes

By PABLO AVILA

THE KING

CONSIDERING the merits and services of Don Joseph de Moraga,¹ alférez of the company of the Presidio of Fronteras,² I have agreed to grant him the commission of Lieutenant of the company of the Presidio of San Francisco in the Province of California.

Therefore, I request that the Commandant General of the Interior Provinces of New Spain³ issue the order putting him in possession of said commission and granting him the privileges and exemptions accorded to such office, for such is my wish; that he be registered in the respective department of my Royal Treasury, and that a note be made below to that effect; that he be paid the salary fixed⁴ for his rank, at whatever intervals and form as allowed by law. I declare that he owes no Media-Anata tax,⁵ because this employ is wholly military. A record is to be made of this appointment in the Comptroller General's office of my Council for the Indies. Issued at San Lorenzo el Real the first of November, 1782.⁶

I The King⁷

Joseph de Galvez [Rubric]⁸

Don Joseph de Moraga's appointment as Lieutenant of the Company of the Presidio of San Francisco.

[On the reverse side]

Recorded in the Comptroller General's office for the Indies.

Madrid, November 2nd, 1782.

In the absence of the Comptroller General
[SIGNED] Pedro de Gallarreta [Rubric]

Arispe, May 31, 1783.

Let His Majesty's command in this Royal Dispatch be obeyed; let it be registered in the books of the Commandant General's office and in the corresponding department of the Royal Treasury.

[SIGNED] El Cavro (Caballero) De Croix [Rubric]

Registered in the Secretary's books of the Commandant General's office. Arispe, May 31, 1783.

[SIGNED] Christoval Corvalom [Rubric]

NOTES

1. Anza recommends Moraga for this appointment in his letter to Bucareli, the viceroy, dated Dec. 1, 1774, as first choice, because he has been a soldier and alférez for

eighteen years, has fulfilled his obligations gallantly, has much greater intelligence than the second choice, and has ability to write. Herbert E. Bolton, *Anza's California Expeditions* (Berkeley, 1930), V, 216-217; for a specimen of Moraga's writing, see *ibid.*, III, 383.

2. A presidio in Sonora east of Nogales and a short distance south of the present international line. Bolton, *op. cit.*, V, 216.

3. The northern provinces of New Spain, the Interior Provinces (Sonora, New Mexico, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Texas, and the two Californias) were withdrawn from the viceroyalty and erected into a separate jurisdiction under the government of a comandant general, who was to have his official residence in Sonora, Arispe. The first person appointed to this office was Teodoro de Croix, nephew of the former viceroy of the same surname. The next to the last signature appearing in this document is Teodoro's.

4. According to Bancroft (*History of California*, San Francisco, 1884-90, I, 634), the salary for this rank was \$550 in 1796.

5. This tax was created by Philip IV in 1631. Had Moraga not been exempted, he would have had to pay one-half of his first year's salary. Rafael Altamira y Crevea, *Historia de España y de la Civilización Española* (Barcelona, 1913), III, 279.

6. The appointment was approved by the viceroy on Dec. 30, 1774. Bolton, *op. cit.*, V, 217.

7. Charles III, who reigned from 1759 to 1788: "Spain's best and most liberal-minded monarch," according to Bancroft, *California Pastoral* (San Francisco, 1888), p. 63.

8. It must have been particularly gratifying to Galvez to sign this appointment. As the special representative and minister of the king (visitador general) in New Spain, Galvez had taken a positive interest in promoting the colonization of California. Bolton, *op. cit.*, I, 61, calls him "... the Father of Alta California."

Acknowledgment: For the privilege of translating and editing this document, the present writer wishes to express his thanks to the owner of the original, Mr. Oliver Moraga of Santa Barbara.