
Document 1668N

Account by then-Brother Bustillo, made in 1691

Source: ARSI Phil. 13, fol. 298-299v.

Note: This document is part of Doc. 1691A, which is only given in synopsis in that other location.

Extract from a letter to Fr. General Gonzalez, dated Agadña 14 March 1691

Original text in Spanish.

*9. Señor General Antonio Nieto, que dicho año de 68 viniendo por Capitan y Maestre de dicha Nao Almiranta **San Diego** a cargo del Almirante Bartholome Muñoz, y en ella embarcado el Padre San Vitores desde Manila hasta Mexico, y desde Mexico en demanda desta su Mission y entrada en Marianas; aviendo muerto dicho Almirante tres dias antes de descubrir estas Islas, y dada sepultura al cuerpo en el mar, y abierto el pliego para ver quien venia señalado por Cabo Superior de dicha Nao Almiranta por muerte de su Almirante; se hallo dicho Capitan y Maestre Antonio Nieto, el qual, luego que se vio con el cargo de toda la Nao, se ofrecio muy de corazon al Padre San Vitores y le dixo que el desembarque de su Reverencia y entrada en Marianas (que ya las llamaban asi) para predicar la Fe, se avia de executar todo mediante Dios y de la manera que su Reverencia quisiese, y fuese servido, sin perdonar diligencia ninguna hasta conseguirlo a pesar del Diablo &c^a. Resolucion que alegró y consoló mucho al Padre San Vitores porque el comun enemigo no dexaba de poner muchas dificultades para dicho desembarque y entrada, por no aver exemplar por decir algunos y no pocos de la Nao que no avia parage para poderlo hacer; sino es uno y ese dificultoso: cosa que traía mui clavada en su corazon dicho Padre San Vitores por lo qual se deshacía por ganar la voluntad del difunto Almirante para este fin; sin saber si malograria sus intentos dexando en la sombra de la eterna muerte a tantas almas. Pero con el favor divino, zelo, y vigilancia de dicho Cabo Superior de la Nao todo lo que le propuso, y dixo el [fol. 298v] Ven. Padre San Vitores confiriendo los dos entre si muy amigablemente todos los medios y caminos posibles para lo dicho en orden a lo qual tambien sugirio*

al Ven. Padre dicho Capitan Nieto lo que su mucha piedad y zelo le dictaba para el fin deseado.

*Descubierta pues la tierra, y prevenidos entre los dos todos los lances y medios mas suaves y eficaces, y sin armas ningunas para saltar en tierra la Mission y acercandose la Nao a esta Isla de Guan, y los Indios della con sus banquillas a la Nao; no es decible las estratagemas de amor y cariño, y dadivas con que salio al bordo de la Nao dicho Capitan Nieto acompañado del Ven. Padre para que entrasen en el Navio estos Isleños; mas ellos no se atrevieron por mas que dicho Capitan y el Ven. Padre y todos los demas los combidaban con agasajos, temiendo ellos no fuese estratagema para cogellos; pero como no era, sino que el Demonio temeroso de la ruina que le amenazaba la Predicacion del Santo Evangelio en estas Islas, infundio su propio temor en estos Indios. Y sintiendolo mucho dicho Capitan Nieto y el Padre San Vitores se le ofrecio y dixo a dicho Nieto que se cantase la Letania de Nuestra Señora al mismo bordo del Navio, y pareciendole muy bien a dicho Capitan se hizo asi: cantose la Letania, y al **Santa MARIA ora pro nobis**, empezaron a entrar en el Navio sin temor alguno, cosa que alegró muchissimo al buen Cabo Superior Antonio Nieto, el qual viendo que al acabar la Letania estaba toda la Nao llena de Marianos no cabia de contento, ni cesaba de abrazarlos, agasajarlos, y acariciarlos con todo quanto tenia, con quantos medios, dadivas, y agasajos pudo acompañandole en todo el Padre San Vitores o por mejor decir siguiendo, y imitando en todo al Ven. Padre o diremos que uno y otro se querian exceder mutuamente en los agasajos, caricias y dadivas para ganar a estos Marianos: y lo consiguio cada uno por su parte. Pues se quedaron dichos Isleños aquella noche en la Nao, para cuyo surgidero y dar fondo, donde se pudiese, desde luego que entraron los Marianos en ella hizo diligencia dicho Cabo por medio del Interprete y del Ven. Padre que muy cuidadoso andaba tambien en esto. **Diose fondo como dos tiros de mosquete lexos de Agadña y en frente del pueblo de Apurguan; pero aquella noche, arrastrando la Nao el ancla, amanecio por la mañana, no sin grande admiracion de todos, dada fondo en frente de Agadña**, donde estuvo dos dias clavada sin moverse hasta desembarcarse todo, y los 6 Missioneros todos, a quienes acompañó a tierra el mismo Cabo y Capitan Nieto, y estuvo en Agadña los dos dias que estuvo la Nao dada fondo.*

*Aqui en tierra no es decible lo que allanó y suavizó la entrada dicho Nieto con su especial modo y cariño a los Indios todos agasajandolos, abrazandolos, y sentandose con ellos en el suelo a su usanza en petates, que son sus sillas, y ellos los traían con muy abundante comida para que el mismo se sentase tambien, y comiesse con ellos en señal de hermandad; porque desde luego los comenzo dicho Nieto a llamar sus Hermanos. Y aviando comido con ellos y de sus comidas como lo acostumbran, y agasajado a los Principales con todo lo que pudo, y ellos estimaban mucho como eran sombreros, vestidos, conchas de tortuga, abalorios, arcos de hierros, cuchillos, hachas &c^a y encargado a **Quipuha** (en cuyo camarín y casa se hizo este recibimiento y combite y mutuos agasajos [fol. 299] &c^a)] por ser el **Fangonónan**, o cabeza de Agadña, y aver recibido*

en su casa con mucho agasajo la noche que dio fondo la Nao a los PP. Luis de Medina y Pedro de Casanova.

Aviendo pues sucedido tan bien y felizmente todo lo dicho, y quedado dicho Capitán emparentado espiritualmente con ellos por los niños de que fue padrino, y concluido con todo lo que avia que hacer de su parte, queriendose ya ir a su Nao para proseguir su viage a Philipinas encargo, digo, muy mucho a dicho Principal y Cabeza deste Partido Quipuha que mirase mucho por los Missioneros y se los guardase muy bien y no recibiesen daño alguno pues quedaban para enseñarles el camino del cielo &c^a, como ya lo avian entendido, a fe de la amistad, hermandad y parentezco espiritual que avian contraido, porque en volviendo por aca otra vez; sino los hallase vivos, en vez de experimentar agasajos, y dadivas de cosas preciosas que les traeria, experimentarían su saña y rigor en destruirlos y asolar la tierra con las armas de fuego, que ya avian experimentado del olandes los estragos que hacian ellas en los enemigos de los que las manegan y irritan &c^a A que respondió Quípuha que fuese sin cuidado ninguno de que los PP. y sus compañeros lo pasasen mal en su tierra, o recibiesen daño, a ver lo contrario como el mismo lo estaba experimentando en su gente; pues mientras se avia detenido aqui para desembarcar los PP. y su gente y cosas, se avian esmerada todos los suyos en el recibimiento y trato que avia visto de agasajos, comida &c^a de lo que llebaba su tierra. Y así fue que dicho Quipuha con toda su gente lo hizo muy bien con dicho Nieto y con los de su Nao que los mas, o casi todo todos saltaron en tierra excepto el Piloto Mayor Antonio de Acevedo por no dexar la Nao: y con todos los Missioneros y los que los acompañaban lo hizo muy bien y con mucho afecto dicho Quipuha, viniendo el mismo, ida la Nao, a guardar y hacer centinelas de noche a los Missioneros y a sus compañeros que havitaban en su camarín, mientras nos hacia otro muy capaz y mas grande; aunque no se acaba en sus días, pues a los 6 meses de la llegada aqui de los Missioneros murio dicho D. Juan Quipuha muy bien dispuesto y bautizado estrenando el mismo la 1^a yglesia de que servia dicho su camarín, enterrandose en ella con las ceremonias ecclesiasticas hasta entonces nunca vistas dellos. Y aunque entonces murio este fino christiano y leal amigo Mariano su gente a quien dexo muy encomendados los Missioneros lo hizo bien con ellos, y a su exemplar todos los demas por casi 3 años, hasta que el Demonio impaciente de tanta paz evangelica levanto la persecucion a ultimos de Julio de 71, y en la de Abril de 72 en que fue muerto el Ven. Padre. Y antes de dicha persecucion por Junio de 71 pasando a Manila 3 destos Marianos por primicias desta christiandad no es decible las caricias que les hizo dicho Nieto como si fueran sus hijos los tubo consigo 3 años, y ricos de cosas y alajas de estima entre ellos, y aviados de todo lo necessario los volvio a embiar alegres a su tierra.

De lo referido consta quan Insigne y Principal Bienhechor de Marianas es dicho General Antonio Nieto, pues fue el que inmediata y efectivamente entro aqui los primeros Predicadores del Evangelio. Porque si dicho Nieto no lo quisiera hacer se saliera con ello, y le era mas facil el dexarlo de hacer, que no hacer lo que hizo para desembarcarlos con tantos desvelos, cuidados, vigilancia y trabajo &c^a. [fol. 299v] y lo que mas es, por que donde dio fondo dicho año de 68 para dexar la Mission no es el sitio aprop-

osito (aunque Dios entonces parece le hizo muy apropósito) como se ha visto, pues, despues aca, ni el mismo Piloto que venia entonces, ni dicho General, ni otros aunque han venido varias veces despues y por esta vanda de Agaña, jamas dieron fondo en este parage, por ser tan malo, por cuya razon se le debe a dicho General la efective entrada aqui de la Mission y christiandad. Fuera de otras razones muy eficaces, y son las siguientes:

1ª, que como jamas avia avido exemplar que de las Naos desta carrera huviese saltado gente en tierra de Marianas, ni dado fondo en ellas, y en Manila se tenia esto por cosa impossible, por ser, decian, las costas de Marianas muy brabas, y no poderse arimar ninguna Nao a tierra para esto, ni mucho menos dar fondo; siempre los de Filipinas fueron de parecer que por dicha razon dicho Padre San Vitores y sus compañeros se volverian a Manila sin poder entrar en Ladrones, que asi llamaban estas Islas.

2ª razon, que si dicho Cabo Superior Antonio Nieto se aferrara en no poder echar los Missioneros en tierra se saliera con ello, por las razones dichas, y en Manila fuera mas creido en esta que no en hacer lo que hizo dexando en Marianas Misioneros porque aunque sabian los dexaba; no acababan de aprehender como le fue possible el desembarcarlos ni como podia aver vencido una dificultad para ellos tan inmensa y mas por la vanda que los avia desembarcado y dado fondo para ello; que ya digo es tal el parage que 2 leguas la mar afuera huyen de el oy en dia las Naos. Y ni por dicha vanda de Agaña podia dicha Nao Almiranta ir ya entonces a Umatag, o a Ati, o a otra banda para dar fondo, como consto a los practicos.

3ª, porque dexando entonces dicho Capitan Nieto de echar Missioneros en Marianas llebandoselos a Manila no era facil, antes moralmente cierto de que hasta aora no se huviera efectuado la Predicacion de Nuestra Santa Fe en Marianas por las grandes contradiciones que esto siempre ha tenido en Manila, de las quales nace no pocas veces pasarse las Naos sin dar fondo, ni dexar el socorro, en que ha avido Pilotos y Generales que o por mal afecto o por sus aprehensiones, o por que aqui no ay util humano ninguno o por todas estas cosas ni han dado fondo en el puerto que ay para esto, ni acercadose lo que debian a tierra, por mas zedulas y ordenes que ay para esto de su Magstad.

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Translation.

9. [Another benefactor of the Mission was] General Antonio Nieto who, in the said year of 1668, as he was coming as Captain and Master of the said almiranta galleon **San Diego**, under the command of Admiral Bartolomé Muñoz, aboard which Father San Vitores came from Manila to Mexico, and from Mexico bound for this his Mission and entrance to the Marianas. When the said Admiral died three days before these Islands were sighted, he was buried at sea. In opening the letter to see who had been chosen as Commander of the said almiranta galleon, in case of the death of her Admiral, it was found that it was the said Captain and Master Antonio Nieto. When he saw that he was in charge of the whole galleon, he offered himself very sincerely to

Father San Vitores and told him that the landing of His Reverence and entrance to the Marianas (as they were already calling them that way) to preach the Faith, was to take place, God helping, exactly as His Reverence wished, and would like, without omitting any effort until achieving it, in spite of the Devil, etc. This decision pleased and consoled Father San Vitores very much, because the common enemy was not giving up his placing of many difficulties for the said landing and entrance; some said that there was no precedent, and not a few aboard the galleon said that there was no area where it could be done, except one and that one was difficult. Such a thing was a thorn implanted in the heart of the said Father San Vitores, and that is why he had been striving to gain the goodwill of the deceased Admiral for this purpose, without knowing if his intentions would fail, and leave some many souls in the darkness of eternal death. However, with divine favor, the zeal and vigilance of the said Commander of the galleon, everything that Ven. Father San Vitores suggested to him, and told him, when the two of them were discussing between themselves in such a friendly manner all the possible means and ways to do it; with this in mind the said Captain Nieto would also made suggestions to Ven. Father, guided as he was by his great piety and zeal, for the purpose intended.

Indeed, once the land has been sighted, and the two of them had foreseen all the events and the smoother and more effective means, and without any weapons, to have the Mission step ashore and the galleon approach this Island of Guan, and to have its Indians come to the galleon with their canoes, it is incredible the stratagems of love and affection, and enticements that the said Captain Nieto used at the rail of the galleon, in the company of Ven. Father, to make these Islanders come aboard the ship. However, they did not dare do it, no matter how the said Captain and Ven. Father, and all the others, invited them in with endearments; they feared that it was a stratagem to capture them. It was not, but the Devil, fearing he would be ruined by the threat of the preaching of the holy Gospel in these Islands, instilled his own fear in these Indians. The said Captain Nieto was sorry about it. Father San Vitores suggested and said to the said Nieto that the Litany of Our Lady should be sung, right there at the rail of the ship, and the said Captain said that it was a good idea, and so it was done. The litany was sung, and upon hearing the **Santa MARIA ora pro nobis** [Holy Mary, pray for us], they began to come aboard the ship without any fear, something that pleased the good Commander Antonio Nieto very much; when he saw that at the end of the Litany the whole galleon was full of Marianos, he could not contain his joy, and did not cease embracing them, welcoming them, and caressing them with everything he had, with as many means, enticements, and welcoming presents as he could, Father San Vitores accompanying him in everything, or better said, he was following and imitating the Ven. Father in everything. Let us say that either one wished to outdo the other in their greetings, caresses and enticements in order to gain these Marianos; each of them did achieve it his own way. Indeed, the said Islanders remained aboard the galleon that night, to help find an anchorage where the galleon could possibly anchor. As soon as the Marianos came aboard her, the said Commander made an effort to achieve this, through

the Interpreter and the Ven. Father, who was very concerned about it. **The anchor was let go at a distance of about two musket shots from Agadña, facing the town of Apurguan.¹ However, that night the anchor dragged, and at daybreak the next morning, at the great admiration of everyone, the galleon was anchored in front of Agadña,** where she remained fixed for two days without moving, until everything had been landed, including all the 6 Missionaries, whom the Commander himself accompanied ashore, where he remained at Agadña during the two days that the galleon was anchored there.

Here ashore, it is incredible how the entrance was made easier and smoother by the said Nieto, with his special manner and affection toward all the Indians, welcoming them all, embracing them, and sitting with them on the ground upon some mats, which are, in accordance with their custom, the equivalent of chairs. They brought in food in great abundance, so that he would also feel right, and eat with them as a sign of brotherhood, because, of course, the said Nieto began to call them his Brothers right away. Having eaten with them and partaken of their foods, as per custom, and rewarded the Chiefs with everything he could, and was appreciated by them very much, such as hats, clothes, tortoise shells, beads, iron hoops, knives, axes, etc. he entrusted [us] to **Quipuha** (in whose shed and house this reception, banquet, and mutual giving of presents, etc. took place) as he was the **Fangonónan**, or chief of Agadña, and had welcomed Fathers Luis de Medina and Pedro de Casanova in his house in a very friendly manner the night that the galleon anchored.

Having thus succeeded so well and happily in everything said above, and the said Captain having become their spiritual compadre, by becoming godfather to their children, and concluded with everything that he had to do on his part, wishing to go back to his galleon in order to pursue his voyage to the Philippines, he entrusted, I repeat, very much to the said Chief and Leader of this district, Quipuha, that he should watch over the Missionaries very much and should keep them very well, and they should not receive any harm, since they remained to teach them the way to Heaven, etc. as they had already agreed, for the sake of the friendship, brotherhood, and spiritual kinship that they had contracted, because, when he would return later, if he did not find them alive, instead of experiencing presents, and enticements of precious things that he would bring them, they would experience his fury and rigor in destroying them and razing the land with firearms, as they had already experienced from the Dutch the havoc caused by firearms upon enemies of the men handling such weapons, when irritated, etc. To this, Quipuha answered that he should not fear that the Fathers and their companions would be badly treated in his land, or would receive harm; for the proof, he said, all he had to do is look at his people. Indeed, during his stopover here to land the Fathers and their people and things, he saw how all his people had vied with one another to welcome and treat them with presents, food, etc. and everything his land could give. So it was that the said Quipuha with all his people managed to convince the said Nieto and

1 Ed. note: That is, facing the present-day site of the memorial cemetery in Maite.

most of the people aboard the galleon, and most of those stepped ashore, except the Pilot Major Antonio de Acevedo who did not want to leave the galleon. With all the Missionaries and those who accompanied them, the said Quipuha behaved very well. Indeed, after the departure of the galleon, he himself watched, and did guard duty at night, over the Missionaries and their companions who lived in his shed, while he was building another, more spacious, one for us; although it was not finished in his time. Indeed, within 6 months of the arrival here of the Missionaries, the said Don Juan Quipuha died very well prepared and baptized, and he was the first one to be buried in the first church, which was in fact his own shed. He was buried in it with the church ceremonies that had never been seen beforehand.¹ Although this fine Christian and loyal Mariano friend died then, all of his people to whom he had recommended the Missionaries very well, behaved very well themselves, at his example, for almost 3 years, until the Devil, impatient of so much evangelical peace raised the persecution at the end of July 1671, and that of April 1672 during which Ven. Father was killed. Before the said persecution, in June 1671, when 3 of these Marianos went off to Manila, as the first fruits of this Christian community, it is incredible the carresses that the said Nieto did to them, as if they were his own sons. He kept them with him for 3 years, and enriched them with things and precious things that are appreciated among them, and outfitted them with everything necessary, he sent them off to return happily to their land.²

From what has been narrated above, it is clear that the said General Antonio Nieto is a famous and principal benefactor of the Marianas. Indeed, it was he who carried out the immediate and effective entrance of the first preachers of the Gospel here, because, if the said Nieto had not wished to see it done, it certainly would have been easier for him to omit doing it, and not to do what he did, to land them with so many concerns, cares, vigilance and labor, etc. Furthermore, because where he anchored in the year 1668 to leave the Mission is not a suitable place [for anchoring] (although it seems that God made it so that time) as it has been seen; indeed, later on here, neither the same Pilot who came then [i.e. Acevedo] nor the said General, or any others, although they have come by many times since, and by the same side of [the island as] Agaña, they have never [again] anchored in this area, as it is so bad. That is why the effective entrance here of the Mission and of Christianity is due to the said General. Besides, there are other, very efficient, reasons, and they are as follows:

1° as there was no precedent for the galleons of this run to have left people ashore in the Marianas, or having anchored there; and in Manila this was regarded as something impossible, the reason being, they said, that the coasts of the Marianas are very

1 Ed. note: The natives did not object, because it was their custom to bury the dead under their own houses. In fact, for the first few years, even the relatives of Christian deceased refused to have them buried in the "house of God", the Spanish-type church that was still incomplete when Quipuha died. So, strictly speaking, as far as the natives were concerned, he was not buried in a church.

2 Ed. note: These first Chamorro tourists, as I call them, were Ignacio Osi, Pedro Guirán, and Marias Yay (see Doc. 1681A).

rough, and no galleon can come up close enough to the shore to do that, and even less to anchor. Those in the Philippines were always of the opinion that, for this reason, the said Father San Vitores and his companions would return to Manila without having entered in the Ladrones; that is how they called these Islands.

2° reason, if the said Commander Antonio Nieto had insisted in not being able to land the Missionaries, he would have been excused for the said reasons, and in Manila he would have been believed more easily than otherwise, which he did by leaving Missionaries in the Marianas, because, although they learned that he did, they just could not begin to understand how he could have landed them, and been able to overcome a difficulty for them so huge, specially considering the side of the island where he had landed them and even anchored there. As I have already said, the area is such that even nowadays the galleons do not even come within 2 leagues of the place. Also, the said almiranta galleon could not have passed then from the side of Agaña to Umatag, or Ati, or to another side in order to anchor, as it is clear to coastal pilots.

3° because, it was not easy then for the said Captain Nieto to give up the landing of Missionaries in the Marianas; rather, it is morally certain that so far there would not have been any preaching of our holy Faith in the Marianas, on account of the big contradictions that this matter has always suscitated in Manila, the result of which is shown by the fact that many times the galleons pass by without anchoring, or leaving the succor. There have been some pilots and generals who, either out of hate or out of apprehensions, or because here there is no human benefit at all, or because of all of the above. They have not anchored in the port that exists for that purpose either, not even come close to the land as they should, no matter how many decrees and orders have been issued by His Majesty for this purpose.

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