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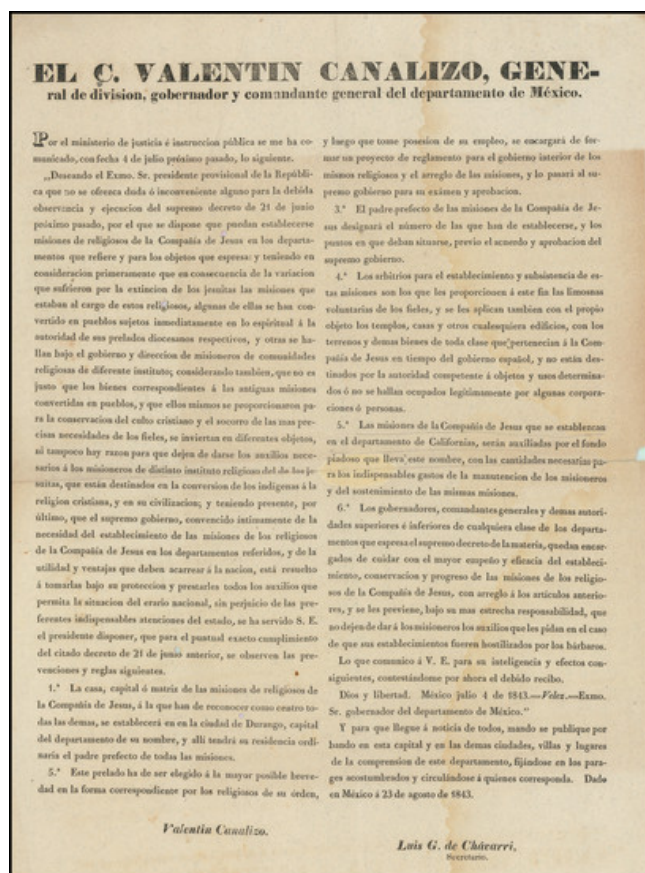
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[California Missions] El C. Valentin Canalizo General De Division, Gobernador y Comandante General del Departamento de México [Mexico: Aug. 23, 1843]

Stock#: 101827
Map Maker: Canalizo
Date: 1843
Place: Mexico City
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 10.25 x 14.5 inches including text
Price: \$ 4,500.00



Description:

Return of the Jesuits To Upper & Lower California

Rare official decree issued by Valentín Canalizo, acting in his capacity as the interim president and commander general of the department of Mexico, dated August 23, 1843, outlining the terms under which the Jesuit order, expelled from Spanish territories in the late 18th century, would be allowed to return to, and re-establish the missions of Upper and Lower California.

This decree follows the decree of President Antonio López de Santa Anna on June 22, 1843, allowing the re-establishment of Jesuit missions in northern Mexico, including the regions of California, New Mexico, Texas, Sonora, Sinaloa, Durango, Chihuahua, and Coahuila. The two decrees were a strategic response to over three hundred years of unsuccessful efforts to civilize the indigenous populations through force and



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conquest. The June 22 decree suggested that the re-admittance of the Jesuits into these territories, similar to their acceptance in the United States and other American republics, would not undermine republican governance or freedoms. Instead, it was viewed as a potential solution to secure the nation's border areas and facilitate the assimilation of indigenous groups into the colonial society.

The decree, signed by Valentin Canalizo and Luis G. de Chávarri, highlights the Mexican government's strategic pivot towards religious missions as instruments of colonial control and cultural transformation.

Valentín Canalizo, a notable military figure and political leader during a turbulent period in Mexican history, was aligned with the centralist policies and had assumed the provisional presidency multiple times during the 1840s. This document emanates from a time of considerable political flux and religious reconfiguration in Mexico, following the country's independence from Spain in 1821 and preceding the U.S.-Mexican War (1846-1848).

The decree is a manifestation of the complex relationship between the Mexican state and the Catholic Church, highlighting the government's control over religious orders and their establishments. It specifies the roles, responsibilities, and limitations imposed on the Jesuit missions within Mexico, particularly emphasizing the funding mechanisms through the Pious Fund of the Californias, a significant endowment originally established to support the missions in the Californias.

The decree concludes with the formal endorsements of Canalizo and his secretary, Luis G. de Chávez, adding an official seal to the proceedings and decisions outlined within the text. The presence of these signatures not only authenticates the document but also serves as a testament to the hierarchical and bureaucratic nature of governmental proceedings in mid-19th century Mexico.

The Pious Fund of the Californias

The Pious Fund of the Californias, with origins going back to 1697, began as a charitable fund in New Spain intended to support Catholic missionary activities in the then far-flung frontier regions of California and Baja California. Originally administered by the Jesuits, the fund also supported Franciscan missions in Alta California. Originating from donations by private benefactors and later augmented by contributions from the Spanish Crown, the fund became a crucial financial resource for the establishment and maintenance of missions, churches, and the spread of Christianity among Indigenous peoples in these territories. These missions, many of which evolved into major cities like San Francisco and Los Angeles, played a central role in shaping the cultural and social landscape of the region.

Following Mexico's independence from Spain, the management of the Pious Fund became a subject of



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dispute between the Mexican government and the Catholic Church. The present broadside dates from this period, when, in the wake of Santa Anna's 1842 decree ordering that the properties of the fund be sold and the proceeds incorporated into the national treasury, the Jesuits were called upon to re-establish the maintenance of the California missions.

With the conclusion of the Mexican American War in 1848 the issue of the Pious Fund eventually went into international arbitration between the United States and Mexico, specifically over the apportionable funds (plus interest) owed to the missions of Upper California (i.e. the missions in the present state of California). The legal issues extended well into the 20th century, highlighting the lasting significance of the Pious Fund in the history of the American Southwest.

Rarity

The broadside is very rare. OCLC locates only two examples, those at U.C Berkeley (Bancroft Library) and Yale.

Transcription

The full document translates as follows:

***EL C. VALENTIN CANALIZO, GENERAL of division, governor and general commander
of the department of Mexico.***

By the Ministry of Justice and Public Instruction, I have been informed, with a date of July 4 of the past year, the following:

"Desiring that the Most Excellent Mr. Provisional President of the Republic ensures there is no doubt or inconvenience for the proper observance and execution of the supreme decree of June 21 of the past year, by which it is arranged that missions of the religious of the Society of Jesus can be established in the departments referred to and for the purposes expressed: and having firstly considered that as a result of the variation suffered by the extinction of the Jesuits, the missions that were under the charge of these religious, some of them have turned into towns immediately subject in the spiritual to the authority of their respective diocesan prelates, and others are under the government and direction of missionaries from religious communities of different institutes; considering also, that it is not just that the goods corresponding to the old missions converted into towns, which they themselves provided for



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the conservation of the Christian worship and the support of the most pressing needs of the faithful, are invested in different objects, nor is there reason for the necessary aids not to be given, which are destined for the conversion of the indigenous to the Christian religion, and in their civilization; and keeping in mind, lastly, that the supreme government, intimately convinced of the necessity of establishing the missions of the religious of the Society of Jesus in the referred departments, and of the utility and advantages that should bring to the nation, is resolved to take them under its protection and provide them with all the aids that the national treasury situation permits, without prejudice to the state's primary indispensable attentions, it has pleased His Excellency the president to order, that for the punctual exact compliance of the aforementioned decree of June 21, the following precautions and rules are observed:

- 1. The house, capital or main office of the missions of religious of the Society of Jesus, to which they must recognize as the center all the others, will be established in the city of Durango, capital of the department of its name, and there will reside ordinarily the father prefect of all the missions.*
- 2. This prelate must be elected as soon as possible in the corresponding manner by the religious of his order, and once he takes possession of his post, he will be in charge of forming a project of regulations for the internal government of the same religious and the arrangement of the missions, and he will pass it to the supreme government for its examination and approval.*
- 3. The father prefect of the missions of the Society of Jesus will designate the number of missions to be established, and the points in which they should be located, prior to the agreement and approval of the supreme government.*
- 4. The means for the establishment and subsistence of these missions are those provided for this purpose by the voluntary alms of the faithful, and also applied to the same purpose are the temples, houses, and any other buildings, with the lands and other goods of all kinds that belonged to the Society of Jesus during the Spanish government, and are not assigned by the competent authority to determined objects and uses or are not legitimately occupied by some corporations or persons.*



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- 5. The missions of the Society of Jesus that are established in the department of the Californias, will be assisted by the pious fund bearing this name, with the necessary amounts for the indispensable expenses of the maintenance of the missionaries and the support of the same missions.***
- 6. The governors, commanding generals, and other higher and lower authorities of any kind of the departments that the supreme decree of the matter expresses, are charged with taking the greatest care and efficiency in the establishment, preservation, and progress of the missions of the religious of the Society of Jesus, according to the previous articles, and they are warned, under their strictest responsibility, not to fail to give the missionaries the aids they ask for in the case that their establishments are harassed by barbarians.*

What I communicate to Your Excellency for your understanding and subsequent actions, replying for now with the proper receipt.

God and liberty. Mexico July 4, 1843.-Velez. Most Excellent Mr. Governor of the department of Mexico."

And so that it becomes known to all, I order it to be published by edict in this capital and in the other cities, towns, and places within the jurisdiction of this department, being posted in the usual places and circulated to whom it may concern. Given in Mexico on August 23, 1843.

Detailed Condition:

Printed broadside. Minor dampstaining.