

years before Galindo Navarro ruled that this proceeding could not be finally determined. Carefully choosing his words, the *asesor* wrote, "One infers that Menchaca branded three hundred, intending to defraud the government." About all Galindo Navarro could suggest was that Cabello try to make him deposit duties for this number temporarily while the case was being tried: "Do as you see fit." It all came to nothing and was another of the many unfinished cases that Cabello turned over to his successor.

Around the time Governor Cabello was denouncing the old captain's son to Commandant General Neve, another case of *bando* violation was taking form, this one much more serious because Don Luis Cazorla, the captain of Bahía Presidio was thought to be implicated. It began in late July, when Fray Joseph Francisco Mariano de la Garza⁶¹ advised the governor that a cash sale had been arranged of 1,000 head of Mission Espiritu Santo's cattle to Don Francisco de Yermo, official purveyor of supplies for the Coahuila presidios. Yermo was awarded a contract to provision the Coahuila companies of Monclova, San Juan Bautista (where he lived), Agua Verde, and La Babia for four years, starting January 1, 1784. This was part of Croix's attempt to reform the way in which presidios were supplied. By that date Presidio Monclova had been returned to the Villa de Monclova, Agua Verde to San Fernando de Austria (Zaragoza, Coahuila), and La Babia to Santa Rosa (Múzquiz, Coahuila), leaving only Presidio San Juan Bautista situated on the Río Grande. An agent of Yermo's, one Don Blás María de Eca y Múzquiz, had arrived from the Valley of Santa Rosa, and Father Garza asked Cabello to grant him a permit to withdraw the herd, a favor that would be greatly in the interest of the natives at the mission. Replying three days later, Cabello told the priest that the export was acceptable, "provided [the cattle] are of one or another of the brands belonging to the mission."⁶² In the event that the

⁶¹ Garza was father president in 1782 and 1783 but left Mission San José to return to the Zacatecan college, later returning to help found Mission Refugio (Fr. Marion A. Habig, *The Alamo Chain of Missions: A History of San Antonio's Five Missions*, p. 242).

⁶² This statement implies that Espiritu Santo had at least two different cattle brands, one perhaps a road brand. Unfortunately, records in BA and NA apparently do not contain *fierros* used by the missions. Perhaps such marks will be found at the

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cattle were unbranded, a permit could not be granted. The reason was supposedly a set of regulations in force between Lieutenant José Santosa (or Santoja), acting commander of the presidio, and the priest at Espíritu Santo, Fray Cárdenas, regarding the counting procedure for *orejanos* branded. But another letter written the same day, July 31, to Bahía Presidio indicates that a fear that *orejanos* would compose much of the herd was the actual reason for Cabello's caution—unless, of course, the exporter wanted to pay 2½ pesos a head for the right to take out *orejano* cattle, something that the reverend fathers at La Bahía assuredly did not want to do. In reply Captain Cazorla hinted that they might be willing to make such an arrangement should it prove impossible to complete the herd of 1,000 head from the branded stock.

In what appears to have been a devious way of setting up Cazorla, Cabello told him that Espíritu Santo should have no trouble filling the contract since he knew that sometime during the middle of the previous year they had branded no less than 2,800 head. Since Cabello could not grant any special favors, he told Cazorla that the fees prescribed in his *bando* of July, 1783, would have to apply but that bulls could be extracted for 12 reales each. The governor closed by urging the captain to keep a close eye on the gathering operation, in view of "misappropriations that have occurred in transactions of that kind."

If Captain Cazorla had any hint of what Cabello was getting at, he certainly did not show it. Perhaps his absence during the years when Croix's original *bando* was taking its toll on the cattle industry accounts for his "everything is under control" report to the governor, which meant, in Cabello's mind, that he had taken the baited hook.⁶³ Cazorla stated that Múzquiz had departed on August 22 with a herd of 1,000 head, all of them "property of the mission, having been earmarked and branded with their irons." Two sergeants of the garrison, Francisco

Zacatecan college *convento* or in one of the archival collections housed elsewhere, such as the fiscal records kept at San Luis Potosí. It is extremely odd that the brands of the province's most important *criadores* should have passed unnoticed by generations of Texas historians.

⁶³ Cazorla had just returned to La Bahía Presidio from seven years' duty (1778–84) as inspector of presidios in Texas and Coahuila during Croix's commandancy.

Vásquez and Antonio Treviño, checked everything while the herd was accessible, and it was ascertained that 530 were cows, the rest being bullocks.

Cabello wasted no words on this simplistic portrayal of what had happened at La Bahía. He knew that there was no way that Espíritu Santo could have sold 1,000 branded and marked cattle. When Carlos Martínez bought 50 head from the mission, it could only furnish him 32 branded; when Fray Cárdenas sold 300 head to Felipe Flores, he was unable to get together more than 25 or 30 branded animals. Also, Flores had turned over his herd—279 *orejanos* plus the few branded—to some Indian vaqueros of Espíritu Santo who showed up with an urgent plea from the padre. These were added to 500 others of the same kind that Múzquiz rounded up and was holding in mission corals in the neighborhood of El Durasno and Las Ánimas.

It seems the governor had laid his groundwork well. Furthermore, in this case Béxar residents would talk, for Múzquiz was a stranger, as was Francisco de Yermo, the other man who was making money on this export. It is uncertain exactly who Don Blás was, but the Eca y Múzquiz name was prominent in the military affairs of Coahuila. Also a roster of the Béxar Presidio, dated December 31, 1787, shows a José Antonio de Eca y "Musques" as third in command. Múzquiz had apparently taken the place of the fugitive Juan José Flores as cattle agent for Yermo, perhaps a factor in the citizens' opposition to the drive. The profits on these *orejanos* headed down to the presidios in Coahuila could have been theirs, calculated the locals. People who met the herd on the trail provided Cabello with damning information, proof that Cazorla's story was far from accurate. Manuel Galbán said that he saw 1,300 head in the herd, at least 300 of them *orejanos*. Young Miguel Ygnacio Gortaris claimed that half of the cattle he saw on the Río Grande were *orejanos*, the other half having brands of Espíritu Santo and Béxar ranchers. Three *peones* who went with the herd said, without explaining their grasp of higher mathematics, that they counted it at the gate upon departure. The tally: 1,314 mature head and 294 yearlings, two-thirds unbranded and the calves totally unmarked. Many of these were later observed on the trail, old, tired-out