
ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

949 East Second Street
Tucson, AZ 85719

Library and Archives
(520) 617-1157

ahsref@azhs.gov

MS 0721

Sedelmayr, Jacobo, 1703-1779
Letters and reports, 1744-1751

DESCRIPTION

Consists of four holograph letters and reports from Sedelmayr, except one report is from an ensign accompanying Sedelmayr's expedition, concerning conditions in Pimeria Alta at missions and the surrounding country. Includes reports on explorations to the Gila and Colorado Rivers which describe the terrain and customs of the people encountered.

1 box, .25 ft.

ACQUISITION

Gift of William J. Holliday.

ACCESS

Originals restricted, photocopies are available for patron use.

COPYRIGHT

Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be addressed to the Arizona Historical Society.

PROCESSING

The collection was processed by Kim Frontz, 1997.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Jacobo Sedelmayr was born in Bavaria on January 12, 1703. A Jesuit missionary, he was sent to New Spain in 1736 and was assigned to the Pimeria Alta region, at the mission at Tubutama. This region, the northernmost frontier of New Spain, now includes Arizona and the Mexican states of Sonora and Sinaloa. Here he worked to convert the native people to Christianity, to build churches, and to improve living conditions. He also undertook several expeditions to investigate the lands and people to the north.

In 1751, eight missions were active in Pimeria Alta. Sedelmayr was Visitador Provincial, located at Tubutama. Also that year, a revolt of the Pimas created a major setback for the Jesuits. Sometime between 1754 and 1762, Sedelmayr was transferred to the mission of Tecoripa, in the province of Sonora. In 1764, he became a professor at the College of Matape on the Yaqui River. On June 25, 1767, the Jesuits were expelled from Mexico. Sedelmayr found refuge in Spain and died at Aldea de Avila, Spain on February 12, 1779.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains three holograph reports and one letter concerning Sedelmayr's mission work and explorations in the Pimeria Alta. The first report is the Relacion of 1746 written for Father Christóbal Escobar y Llamas concerning Sedelmayr's 1744 expedition to the Gila and Bill Williams Rivers. A second report concerns a 1749 expedition to the Yuma Indians and the Colorado River. The third report is a log of an exploration of the lower Colorado River Valley in 1750 written by an ensign from the military escort. Last is a letter co-written by Father Visitor Sedelmayr, Rector Gaspar Aiguez [Stiger], Caborca missionary Tomás Tello, and Sáric missionary Juan Nentwig to the Viceroy. These documents review the history of the missionaries in the area, describe the Casa Grande ruins and the lifestyles of the Indians, and relate the need for additional missionaries to support his work. They are translated in the book Jacobo Sedelmayr: Missionary, frontiersman, explorer in Arizona and Sonora, by Peter Masten Dunne, published by the Arizona Historical Society, 1945.