



# José Velásquez: Saga of a Borderland Soldier

*Ronald L. Ives*

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José Velásquez, 1717-1785, was a common soldier of New Spain whose career was anything but common. A garrison sergeant in the presidio of Loreto, Baja California, Velásquez served as scout on the first—and most important—Spanish entradas into upper California, reconnoitering the advance of the conquistadors as far north as Monterey. On reaching that destination, Velásquez, then in his fifties, was given the charge of delivering his commanding officer's report to Mexico City, an arduous journey on horseback of nearly two thousand miles. Cartographer and bibliophile Ronald Ives tells Velásquez's story in fascinating detail, citing sources of contemporary letters, reports, and other material. His biography is a lasting contribution to the military history of the Spanish borderlands.

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