

AN UNPUBLISHED ACCOUNT OF THE ERUPTION OF TAAL VOLCANO IN 1754

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The eruption of Taal Volcano in 1754 is considered one of the strongest, if not the most violent of the volcanic eruptions, ever recorded in the Philippines. Three accounts of this eruption have been published. The first is a masterful description of the eruption as witnessed by the Agustinian Francisco Bunchillo who was engaged in missionary work at Taal at the time of the eruption. ^① The second is an account of the eruption, undated and unsigned, written by a priest - probably a Jesuit - whose mission was near the volcano, and published in Europe not later than 1758. ^② The third is a brief narrative published, 38 years after the eruption, by the Recoleta Juan de la Concepción. ^③ The fourth account, reported now before this Congress, is the official report of the eruption, prepared under the supervision of and sent by order of the Governor General of the Philippines Pedro Manuel de Arandis^a to the Viceroy of Mexico. The original manuscript is found in the Archive General de la Nación, Mexico. The Section of the Archive General entitled Filipinas embraces about sixty volumes: the report of the eruption of Taal with a map of the volcano is found in the fourth volume of the collection. A direct copy of the original document was secured by the undersigned from the authorities of the Archive General de la Nación through the kindness and diligence of Dr. Joaquin Galle, Director of the Observatorio Astronomico Nacional, Tacubaya, México. The outstanding features of the official report of the Arandis are three.