

# Borderlands Course Reader, Volume One



# BORDERLANDS COURSE READER, VOLUME ONE

jamiestarling



To the extent possible under law, Jamie Starling has waived all copyright and related or neighboring rights to [Borderlands Course Reader, Volume One](#), except where otherwise noted.



# Contents

Introduction	1
PART I. <u>MAIN BODY</u>	
1. Apache Creation Narrative	5
2. Indigenous Languages of the Lower Rio Grande	10
3. Cabeza de Vaca's Narrative, 1542	13
4. Pedro Naranjo's Testimony, 1681	19
5. The Talon Brothers Describe Texas	24
6. Baptismal Records along the Colonial Rio Grande	28
7. Slave Sales Reported in Spanish San Antonio	32
8. Thomas Jefferson Letters to Bernardo Gálvez	36
9. Felix Calleja's Inspection of Nuevo Santander	39
10. Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara's Constitution of Texas	45
11. Niles Register, article on Nuevo Santander and Texas	49
12. Juana de Dios Machado de Ridington's Interview	53
13. José María Sánchez's Account of the Texas Frontier	59
14. Texas Treaty with the Cherokee	65
15. Barbara Aguirre's Petition for a "Divorce"	69
16. Constitution of the Republic Texas, 1836	72
17. John L. O'Sullivan, "Annexation," 1845	78
18. General Francisco Mejia's Proclamation	82
19. A U.S. Prisoner of War in Matamoros	85

20.	President James Polk Calls for War with Mexico	89
21.	Congressman Abraham Lincoln's "Spot Resolutions"	94
22.	Frank Edwards Account of the Texas Rangers.	96
23.	Susan Shelby Magoffin's Account of New Mexico	100
24.	Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo	103
25.	Juan Cortina's Call to Arms in Brownsville	109
26.	Ben Kinchlow's Narrative, A Slave in Brownsville and Freedman in South Texas	114
27.	Texas Secession from the United States	120
28.	Civil War Military Reports from Fort Brown	126
29.	Photographs of Brownsville and Matamoros, 1864-1867	131
30.	The End of the Civil War and Juneteenth	141
	Appendix	147
	Appendix	148

This collection compiles primary source documents and narratives from the present-day U.S.-Mexico Borderlands Region from c. 1500 to 1865. The collection is designed for use with U.S. History and Mexican American surveys as well as Texas history and U.S.-Mexico Borderlands history courses. A few documents are abridged or excerpted from longer sources. All sources contain a citation or link to a source at the foot of the document. Documents span from indigenous accounts and sources of early contact through the late Spanish colonial period, era of Mexican independence, U.S. expansion and the American Civil War.



[PART I]

# **Main Body**



[1]

## Apache Creation Narrative

**This account of creation comes from a Jicarilla Apache oral tradition recorded during the 1930s.**

### **The Creation and the Emergence**

In the beginning there was nothing – no earth, no living beings. There were only darkness, water, and Cyclone, the wind. There were no humans, but only the Hactcin, the Apache supernatural beings. The Hactcin made the earth, the underworld beneath it, and the sky above it. The earth they made as a woman who faces upward, and the sky they made as a man who faces downward. The Hactcin lived in the underworld, where there was no light. There were mountains and plants in the underworld, and each had its own Hactcin. There were as yet no animals or humans, and everything in the underworld existed in a dream-like state and was spiritual and holy.

The most powerful of the Hactcin in the underworld was Black Hactcin. One day Black Hactcin made the first animal with four legs and a tail made of clay. At first he thought it looked peculiar, but when he asked it to walk and saw how gracefully it walked, he decided it was good. Knowing this animal would be lonely, he made many other kinds of animals come from the body of the first. He laughed to see the diversity of the animals he had created. All the animals wanted to know what to eat and where to live, so he divided the foods among

them, giving grass to the horse, sheep, and cow, and to others he gave brush, leaves, and pine needles. He sent them out to different places, some to the mountains, some to the deserts, and some to the plains, which is why the animals are found in different places today.

Next Black Hactcin held out his hand and caught a drop of rain. He mixed this with some earth to make mud and made a bird from the mud. At first he wasn't sure he would like what he had made. He asked the bird to fly, and when it did he liked it. He decided the bird too would be lonely, so he grabbed it and whirled it rapidly clockwise. As the bird became dizzy, it saw images of other birds, and when Black Hactcin stopped whirling it, there were indeed many new kinds of birds, all of which live in the air because they were made from a drop of water that came from the air. Black Hactcin sent the birds out to find places they liked to live, and when they returned he gave each the place that they liked. To feed them, he threw seeds all over the ground. To tease them, however, he turned the seeds into insects, and he watched as they chased after the insects. At a river nearby, he told the birds to drink. Again, however, he couldn't resist teasing them, so he took some moss and made fish, frogs, and the other things that live in water. This frightened the birds as they came to drink, and it is why birds so often hop back in fright as they come down to drink. As some of the birds took off, their feathers fell in the water, and from them came the ducks and other birds that live in the water.

Black Hactcin continued to make more animals and birds. The animals and birds that already existed all spoke the same language, and they held a council. They came to Black Hactcin and asked for a companion. They were concerned that they would be alone when Black Hactcin left them, and Black Hactcin agreed to make something to keep them company. He stood facing the east, and then the south, and then the west, and then the north. He had the animals bring him all sorts of materials from across the land, and he traced his outline on the ground. He then set the things that they brought him in the outline. The turquoise that they brought became veins, the red ochre became blood, the coral became skin, the white rock became bones, the Mexican opal became fingernails and teeth, the jet



became the pupil, the abalone became the white of the eyes, and the white clay became the marrow of the bones. Pollen, iron ore, and water scum were used too, and Black Hactcin used a dark cloud to make the hair.

The man they had made was lying face down, and it began to rise as the birds watched with excitement. The man arose from prone, to kneeling, to sitting up, and to standing. Four times Black Hactcin told him to speak, and he did. Four times Black Hactcin told him to laugh, and he did. It was likewise with shouting. Then Black Hactcin taught him to walk, and had him run four times in a clockwise circle.

The birds and animals were afraid the man would be lonely, and they asked Black Hactcin give him company. Black Hactcin asked them for some lice, which he put on the man's head. The man went to sleep scratching, and he dreamed that there was a woman beside him. When he awoke, she was there. They asked Black Hactcin what they would eat, and he told them that the plants and the cloven-hoofed animals would be their food. They asked where they should live. He told them to stay anywhere they liked, which is why the Apache move from place to place.

These two, Ancestral Man and Ancestral Woman, had children, and the people multiplied. In those days no one died, although they all lived in darkness. This lasted for many years. Holy Boy, another Apache spirit, was unhappy with the darkness, and he tried to make a sun. As he worked at it, Cyclone came by and told him that White Hactcin had a sun. Holy Boy went to White Hactcin, who gave him the sun, and he went to Black Hactcin, who gave him the moon. Black Hactcin told Holy Boy how to make a sacred drawing on a buckskin to hold the sun and moon, and Holy Boy, Red Boy, Black Hactcin, and White Hactcin held a ceremony at which White Hactcin released the sun and Black Hactcin released the moon. The light grew stronger as the sun moved from north to south, and eventually it was like daylight is now.

The people didn't know what this was, and the shamans each began to claim that they had power over the sun. On the fourth day, there was an eclipse. After the sun had disappeared, the Hactcins told the shamans to make the sun reappear. The shamans tried all kinds of tricks, but they couldn't make the

sun come back. To solve the problem, White Hactcin turned to the animals and had them bring the foods they ate. With the food and some sand and water, they began to grow a mountain. The mountain grew, but it stopped short of the hole in the sky that led from the underworld to the earth. It turned out that two girls had gone up on the mountain and had trampled the sacred plants and even had defecated there. White Hactcin, Black Hactcin, Holy Boy, and Red Boy had to go up the mountain and clean it. When they came down and the people sang, and the mountain grew again. It stopped, however, just short of the hole, and when the four went up again they could only see to the other earth. They sent up Fly and Spider, who took four rays of the sun and built a rope ladder to the upper world. Spider was the first one to climb to the upper world, where the sun was bright.

White Hactcin, Black Hactcin, Holy Boy, and Red Boy climbed up the ladder, and they found much water on the earth. They sent for the four winds to blow the water away, and Beaver came up to build dams to hold the water in rivers. Spider made threads to catch the sun, and they made the sun go from east to west to light the entire world, not just one side. Hactcin called for the people to climb up, and for four days they climbed the mountain. At the top they found four ladders. Ancestral Man and Ancestral Woman were the first people to climb up, and the people climbed up into the upper world that we know today. Thus the earth is our mother, and the people climbed up as from a womb. Then the animals came up, and before long the ladders were worn out. Behind the animals came an old man and an old woman, and they couldn't climb the ladders. No one could get them up, and finally the two realized they had to stay in the underworld. They agreed to stay but told the others they must come back to the underworld eventually, which is why people go to the underworld after death.

Everything in the upper world is alive – the rocks, the trees, the grass, the plants, the fire, the water. Originally they all spoke the Apache language and spoke to the people. The Hactcin, however, decided that it was boring to have all these things speaking the same, so they gave all these things and all the animals different voices.

Eventually the people travelled out clockwise across the land. Different groups would break off and stay behind, and their children would begin to play games in which they used odd languages. The people in these groups began to forget their old languages and use these new ones, which is why now there are many languages. Only one group kept on traveling in the clockwise spiral until they reached the center of the world, and these are the Apaches.

Morris Edward Opler, 1938, *Myths and Tales of the Jicarilla Apache Indians: Memoirs of the American Folklore Society* Vol. 31, 406 p. (Reprinted by Kraus Reprint Co., New York, 1969). (E99.J5 O6 1938a)

[2]

## Indigenous Languages of the Lower Rio Grande

These texts were collected by the Swiss linguist Albert Gatschet, who visited Reynosa and Rio Grande City in 1886 and spoke to elderly Native Americans in Cotoname and Carrizo communities in this region. These are among the few texts in the indigenous languages of the lower Rio Grande.

### **Emiterio's narrative and a translation.**

Miterio ipekio't Reynosa vautisa'ra ax pehe-pola'm awaite'm año 1824; yen mo's nahakme'm esto'k, Reynosa paka'm; yen te' Tonia paplau'; ke'm na'wi apaikawai' iwata'p; pekio't kisha'x yawu'et makue'l; mahue'l paplau' kica'x; 20 años ha paite' paikie'm apaikie'; naña Selakampo'm apakamau'le ikamau' apeha'l; Matamoros kleka'l to'm ikamau' Tom Carrizo pakamau'le Salakampo'm.

“Emerito, baptized as a boy in Reynosa, I was born and they threw the water on me in the year 1824, my father was a poor Indian native of Reynosa, my mother Tonita died, four Pinto (Indians) fleeing, five little boys all died, 20 years later after he wished, I came/I went fighting the Comanche that I killed some around Matamoros, the Carrizo killed the Comanches.”

Emiterio, Rio Grande City, 1886.

**“Deer Hunting Song”**

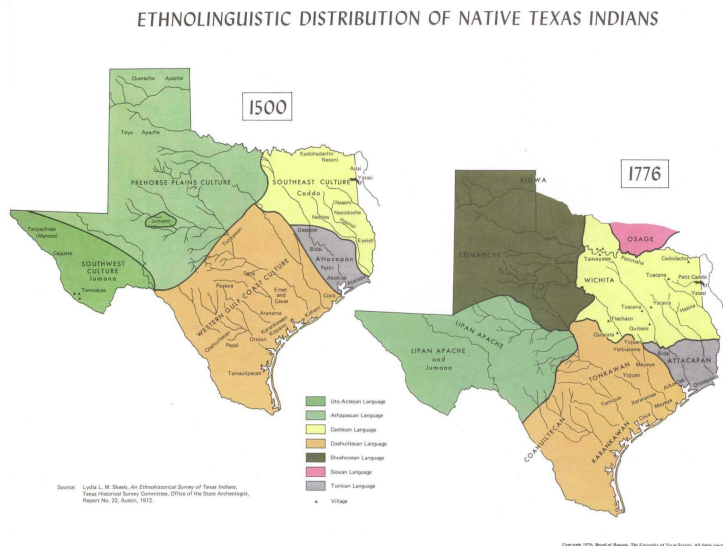
Kuana'ya we'mi kewa'naya we'me  
 We'wana kua'naya we'mi  
 E'we paskue'l pe-a-una'ma  
 Nuewa'na kuana'ya, kuana'ya we-mi  
 Nie' e'we paskue'l pe'auna'ma  
 Kere nami. Nu'we seyota'-i-ye keren'mi  
 A'xpepola'mla  
 A'x melApe'l xi'  
 A'youe'l  
 Nawai' na'wayo nawi'yawe nawa'peka  
 Ke'teseyo' wne' yawa'ye; ke'tso wana'ye, yeketso weni'gawa'ye  
 Yeke'rena wena'payo we'na yaw'ye ke'rena wen' peyo we'na  
 Semeye'no weno' weka'payo weno'  
 Newe ma'eyo' wena newe mal'r eyo wena'  
 Pa-iwe'uni newe' nleta'u pa'iwe-uni  
 Ewe' yekerena' wena' pay o'n  
 Kuama' mekayena, kuamane mekaye'na kuama mete'wela  
 Nuew' nua'ya ma, nua'ya ma, nueno am'a nuekwo a'yami,  
 nua'ya  
 Nueseme'ye peya-una-ma nuew' wayaka'ma  
 Panayowe'n yowe'n panayowe'n yowe'n  
 Nuwe' nuwa'yama'n kua'ya ma;ya  
 Newe' semi'-eke peya-una'ma newe' wa'l aka'ma  
 Newe' ne'-ke senowe'ya payo'wera yenemer'ra  
 Payo'warewa p[a'yp waiye'ye ke'nema ew'e  
 Pakna'x klatai'  
 Newe newa'ya-imawe' lenai'kwena' mani' newwaya'-imawi  
 Newe peke'lana kiau' ananwe'wayi  
 Ke ma'rema pena'waye' newe' na'yowe. Emna pakueti'wak.

**Partial Translation**

(pieced together from Gatschet's 1886 notes)  
 The deer walks, he doesn't leave the monte  
 He doesn't leave the *monte*  
 (The singer asks) "Leave the *monte*"!  
 In a pouring rain, the water slides  
 Cloud, clear the sky of water

Cactus flowers bloom, the deer goes by  
 Dancing, the deer goes by  
 Smelling the fragrant ground  
 The deer goes about the *monte*  
 Skipping above, the deer is alive  
 He is in the *monte*, not away, bending down to graze  
 The deer is alive, walking and looking  
 He does not leave the *monte*  
 The female deer's call leads him away  
 With his tail up, he leaves the *monte* to the south  
 Now fallen on the plain, the deer looks down, he trumpets low  
 I make the deer call

[Swanton, John Reed. 1940. "Linguistic Material from The Tribes of Southern Texas and Northeastern Mexico." Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin. 127:1-145.](#)



From Atlas of Texas. Published by The University of Texas at Austin, Bureau of Business Research, 1976.

[3]

## Cabeza de Vaca's Narrative, 1542

**Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca's narrative, written about five years after his travels across what is now South Texas, provides an early written source about this region's indigenous cultures.**

### CHAPTER 39:

#### Indian Warfare

ALL THESE tribes are warlike and have as much strategy for protection against enemies as if they had been reared in Italy in continual feuds. When in a part of the country where enemies might attack, they place their houses on the skirt of a scrub wood "forest," the thickest and most tangled they can find, and dig a ditch in which they sleep. The warriors cover themselves with small brush, leaving loopholes, and are so camouflaged that, if come upon, they are not discovered.

They open a very narrow pathway into the interior of the scrub stand, where a spot is prepared for the women and children to sleep. At nightfall they kindle fires in their lodges to make possible spies think the tribe is inside them. Before daybreak they relight these fires. Should an enemy come to assault the lodges, the defenders in the ditch sally out and inflict much injury before they are seen or located. When no timber presents itself for this kind of shelter and ambush overnight, they arrange themselves on selected open ground and invest it

with trenches covered with brush, spacing apertures to shoot arrows through.

Once while I was with the Aguenes [Doguenes], their [Quevenes] enemies fell upon them suddenly at midnight, killed three, and wounded many. The Aguenes ran from their houses into the fields facing. When they perceived their assailants had retired, they went back to pick up all the arrows the latter had shot and followed after them so stealthily that the aggressors did not suspect their arrival in the village that night. At 4 A.M. the Aguenes attacked, killed five, and wounded quite a few. The Quevenes fled from their houses, leaving their bows and all they owned behind. In a little while, the wives of the Quevene warriors came to the Aguenes and made a treaty of friendship. The women, on the other hand, sometimes are the cause of war. All these nations, when they have personal enmities and are not related, assassinate at night, waylay, and inflict gross atrocities on each other

#### CHAPTER 40:

##### An Enumeration of the Nations and Tongues

I SHOULD LIKE TO catalog the natives and their languages all the way from the Island of Doom (Galveston Island) to the farthest Cuchendados. (These are names he recalled of some of the Native Americans of the Texas Gulf Coast).

Two languages are found on the island: those spoken by the Capouques and Han. On the mainland over against the island are the Charruco, who take their name from the forests where they live. Advancing along the coast, we come to the Deguenes and, opposite them, the Mendica. Farther down the coast are the Quevenes and, behind them inland, the Mariames. Continuing by the coast: the Guaycones and, behind them inland, the Yeguaces. After these come the Atayos, in their rear the Decubadaos, and beyond them many others in the same direction. By the coast live the Quitoles and, just behind them inland, the Chavavares and, adjoining them in order: the Maliacones, Cuiltchulches, Susolas, and Comos. By the coast farther on are the Camolas and, on the same coast beyond them, those we called the "Fig People." They all differ in their habitations, villages, and tongues.

#### CHAPTER 41:



### A Smoke; a Tea; Women and Eunuchs

EVERYWHERE they produce a stupor with a smoke[of, presumably, peyote cactus, imported from tribes of the Rio Grande valley and southward], for which they will give whatever they possess.

They drink a yellow tea made of leaves from a holly-like shrub [*Ilex cassine*] which they parch in a pot; then the pot is filled with water while still on the fire. When the beverage has boiled twice, they pour it into a jar and thence into a half gourd. As soon as it is frothy, they drink it as hot as they can stand. From the time it is poured from the pot to the time of the first sip, they are shouting, "Who wants to drink?"

When the women hear these shouts, they stand motionless, fearing to move. Even if heavily laden, they dare not budge. Should a woman make a motion, they dishonor her, beat her with sticks, and in great vexation throw out the liquor that is prepared. Those who have drunk any of it regurgitate, which they do readily and painlessly. They say they do this because a woman's movement when she hears the shout causes the tea to carry something pernicious into the drinker's body which will presently kill him.

At the time of boiling, the pot must be covered. If it happens to be open when a woman passes, the rest of that potful is thrown out. The village is three days drinking this tea, eating nothing the whole time. Each person has an arroba and a half [about five or six gallons] a day.

When the women have their indisposition, they seek food only for themselves; no one else will eat of what they bring. In the time I was among these people, I witnessed a diabolical practice: a man living with a eunuch. Eunuchs go partly dressed, like women, and perform women's duties, but use the bow and carry very heavy loads. We saw many thus mutilated. They are more muscular and taller than other men and can lift tremendous weight.

### CHAPTER 42:

#### Four Fresh Receptions

AFTER PARTING from our weeping hosts, we went with the others, who had come to visit, and were hospitably received in

the latter's houses. They brought their children to us to touch their heads and gave us a great quantity of mesquite bean flour.

The mesquite bean, while hanging on the tree, is very bitter like the carob bean but, when mixed with earth, is sweet and wholesome. The Indian method of preparing it is to dig a fairly deep hole in the ground, throw in the beans, and pound them with a club the thickness of a leg and a fathom and a half long, until they are well mashed. Besides the earth that gets mixed in from the bottom and sides of the hole, the Indians add some handfuls, then pound awhile longer. They throw the meal into a basketlike jar and pour water on it until it is covered. The pounder tastes it. If he thinks it not sweet enough, he calls for more earth to stir in, which is added until he judges the dish just right.

Then all squat round, and each takes out as much as he can with one hand. The pits and hulls are thrown onto a hide; the pounder puts them back into the "jar," where more water is poured on; and again the pits and hulls are salvaged. This process is repeated three or four times per pounding. To the partakers, the dish is a great banquet. Their stomachs grow grossly distended from the quantity of earth and water they swallow. Because of us, our newly adopted hosts made an extended festival of this sort, together with big areitos (songs and dances) in the time we tarried with them. At night, during this celebration, the tribe assigned twenty-four Indian men to stand sentry before the lodge we slept in to bar entrance to any until sunrise.

We went on, taking the women for guides, and towards evening forded a chest-deep river. It had a swift current and [swelled by August rains,] may have been as wide as the one in Seville [the Guadalquivir, which is about a hundred paces across].

#### CHAPTER 43

LEAVING THESE INDIANS, we proceeded to the next village, where another novel custom commenced: Those who accompanied us plundered our hospitable new hosts and ransacked their huts, leaving nothing. We watched this with deep concern but were in no position to do anything about it; so for the present had to bear with it until such time as we might

gain greater authority. Those who had lost their possessions, seeing our dejection, tried to console us. They said they were so honored to have us that their property was well bestowed—and that they would get repaid by others farther on, who were very rich.

All through the day's travel we had been badly hampered by the hordes of Indians following us. We could not have escaped if we had tried, they pursued so closely just to touch us. Their insistence on this privilege cost us three hours in going through them so they might depart. Next day, all the inhabitants of the newly reached village came before us. The majority had one clouded eye and others were completely blind, to our astonishment. They are a people of fine forms, pleasant features, and whiter than any of the nations we had so far seen.

Here we began to see mountains. They seemed to sweep in succession from the North Sea and, from what the Indians told us, we believe they rise fifteen leagues from the sea.

We headed towards these mountains, with our newest hosts, who were willing to guide us by way of a related settlement but by no means to risk letting their enemies get in on this great good which they thought we represented. They plundered their relatives as though they were enemies when we arrived, but the people there knew the custom and had hidden some things which, after welcoming us with a festive demonstration, they brought out and presented us: beads, ochre, and some little bags of mica. Following custom, we handed them over to the plundering Indians who came with us, who thereupon resumed their dances and festivities and sent to a nearby village so their relatives there could come see us.

The latter showed up that afternoon, bringing us beads, bows, and other trifles, which we also distributed. As we were about to get on next morning, the local villagers all wanted to take us to friends of theirs who lived at the top of the ridge; many houses stood there and the residents would give us various things, they said. But it was out of our way and we decided to continue our course on the same trail along the plain toward the mountains, which we believed close to the coast where people are mean. Having found the people of the interior better off and milder toward us, we preferred to bear inland. We also felt surer of

finding the interior more populous and more amply provisioned.

When the Indians saw our determination to keep to this course, they warned us that we would find nobody, nor prickly pears or anything else to eat, and begged us to delay at least that day; so we did. They promptly sent two of their number to seek people along the trail ahead. We left next morning, taking several Indians with us. The women carried water and such was our authority that none dared drink but by our leave.

[Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca. Cabeza de Vaca's Adventures in the Unknown Interior of America, Translation of La Relación, Cyclone Covey. Santa Fe, NM: University of New Mexico Press 1983.](#)

[4]

## Pedro Naranjo's Testimony, 1681

**In 1680, the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico staged a revolt against Spanish colonial rule. Pedro Naranjo was a Pueblo man captured by Spanish forces and taken as a prisoner. His testimony before a Spanish judge in Paso del Norte (now Ciudad Juárez and El Paso) describes the uprising.**

Pedro Naranjo of the Queres Nation. [ El Paso del Norte, December 19, 1681.]

In the said plaza de armas on the said day, month, and year, for the prosecution of the judicial proceedings of this case his lordship caused to appear before him an Indian prisoner named Pedro Naranjo, a native of the pueblo of San Felipe, of the Queres nation, who was captured in the advance and attack upon the pueblo of La Isleta. He makes himself understood very well in the Castilian language and speaks his mother tongue and the Tegua. He took the oath in due legal form in the name of God, our Lord, and a sign of the cross, under charge of which he promised to tell the truth concerning what he knows and as he might be questioned, and having understood the seriousness of the oath and so signified through the interpreters, he spoke as indicated by the contents of the autos.

Asked whether he knows the reason or motives which the Indians of this kingdom had for rebelling, forsaking the law of God and obedience to his Majesty, and committing such grave and atrocious crimes, and who were the leaders and principal

movers, and by whom and how it was ordered; and why they burned the images, temples, crosses, rosaries, and things of divine worship, committing such atrocities as killing priests, Spaniards, women, and children, and the rest that he might know touching the question, he said that since the government of Señor General Hernando Ugarte y la Concha they have planned to rebel on various occasions through conspiracies of the Indian sorcerers, and that although in some pueblos the messages were accepted, in other parts they would not agree to it; and that it is true that during the government of the said senior general seven or eight Indians were hanged for this same cause, whereupon the unrest subsided.

Some time thereafter they [the conspirators] sent from the pueblo of Los Taos through the pueblos of the custodia two deerskins with some pictures on them signifying conspiracy after their manner, in order to convoke the people to a new rebellion, and the said deerskins passed to the province of Moqui, where they refused to accept them. The pact which they had been forming ceased for the time being, but they always kept in their hearts the desire to carry it out, so as to live as they are living today. Finally, in the past years, at the summons of an Indian named Popé who is said to have communication with the devil, it happened that in an estufa of the pueblo of Los Taos there appeared to the said Popé three figures of Indians who never came out of the estufa. They gave the said Popé to understand that they were going underground to the lake of Copala. He saw these figures emit fire from all the extremities of their bodies, and that one of them was called Caudi, another Tilini, and the other Tleume; and these three beings spoke to the said Popé, who was in hiding from the secretary, Francisco Xavier, who wished to punish him as a sorcerer. They told him to make a cord of maguey fiber and tie some knots in it which would signify the number of days that they must wait before the rebellion. He said that the cord was passed through all the pueblos of the kingdom so that the ones which agreed to it [the rebellion] might untie one knot in sign of obedience, and by the other knots they would know the days which were lacking; and this was to be done on pain of death to those who refused to agree to it. As a sign of agreement and notice of having

concurrent in the treason and perfidy they were to send up smoke signals to that effect in each one of the pueblos singly. The said cord was taken from pueblo to pueblo by the swiftest youths under the penalty of death if they revealed the secret.

Everything being thus arranged, two days before the time set for its execution, because his lordship had learned of it and had imprisoned two Indian accomplices from the pueblo of Tesuque, it was carried out prematurely that night, because it seemed to them that they were now discovered; and they killed religious, Spaniards, women, and children. This being done, it was proclaimed in all the pueblos that everyone in common should obey the commands of their father whom they did not know, which would be given through El Caydi or El Popé. This was heard by Alonso Catití, who came to the pueblo of this declarant to say that everyone must unite to go to the villa to kill the governor and the Spaniards who had remained with him, and that he who did not obey would, on their return, be beheaded; and in fear of this they agreed to it. Finally the senior governor and those who were with him escaped from the siege, and later this declarant saw that as soon as the Spaniards had left the kingdom an order came from the said Indian, Popé, in which he commanded all the Indians to break the lands and enlarge their cultivated fields, saying that now they were as they had been in ancient times, free from the labor they had performed for the religious and the Spaniards, who could not now be alive. He said that this is the legitimate cause and the reason they had for rebelling, because they had always desired to live as they had when they came out of the lake of Copala. Thus he replies to the question.

Asked for what reason they so blindly burned the images, temples, crosses, and other things of divine worship, he stated that the said Indian, Popé, came down in person, and with him El Saca and El Chato from the pueblo of Los Taos, and other captains and leaders and many people who were in his train, and he ordered in all the pueblos through which he passed that they instantly break up and burn the images of the holy Christ, the Virgin Mary and the other saints, the crosses, and everything pertaining to Christianity, and that they burn the temples, break up the bells, and separate from the wives whom God had given

them in marriage and take those whom they desired. In order to take away their baptismal names, the water, and the holy oils, they were to plunge into the rivers and wash themselves with amole, which is a root native to the country, washing even their clothing, with the understanding that there would thus be taken from them the character of the holy sacraments. They did this, and also many other things which he does not recall, given to understand that this mandate had come from the Caydi and the other two who emitted fire from their extremities in the said estufa of Taos, and that they thereby returned to the state of their antiquity, as when they came from the lake of Copala; that this was the better life and the one they desired, because the God of the Spaniards was worth nothing and theirs was very strong, the Spaniard's God being rotten wood. These things were observed and obeyed by all except some who, moved by the zeal of Christians, opposed it, and such persons the said Popé caused to be killed immediately. He saw to it that they at once erected and rebuilt their houses of idolatry which they call estufas, and made very ugly masks in imitation of the devil in order to dance the dance of the cacina; and he said likewise that the devil had given them to understand that living thus in accordance with the law of their ancestors, they would harvest a great deal of maize, many beans, a great abundance of cotton, calabashes, and very large watermelons and cantaloupes; and that they could erect their houses and enjoy abundant health and leisure. As he has said, the people were very much pleased, living at their ease in this life of their antiquity, which was the chief cause of their falling into such laxity.

Following what has already been stated, in order to terrorize them further and cause them to observe the diabolical commands, there came to them a pronouncement from the three demons already described, and from El Popé, to the effect that he who might still keep in his heart a regard for the priests, the governor, and the Spaniards would be known from his unclean face and clothes, and would be punished. And he stated that the said four persons stopped at nothing to have their commands obeyed. Thus he replies to the question.

Asked what arrangements and plans they had made for the contingency of the Spaniards' return, he said that what he



knows concerning the question is that they were always saying they would have to fight to the death, for they do not wish to live in any other way than they are living at present; and the demons in the estufa of Taos had given them to understand that as soon as the Spaniards began to move toward this kingdom they would warn them so that they might unite, and none of them would be caught. He having been questioned further and repeatedly touching the case, he said that he has nothing more to say except that they should be always on the alert, because the said Indians were continually planning to follow the Spaniards and fight with them by night, in order to drive off the horses and catch them afoot, although they might have to follow them for many leagues. What he has said is the truth, and what happened, on the word of a Christian who confesses his guilt. He said that he has come to the pueblos through fear to lead in idolatrous dances, in which he greatly fears in his heart that he may have offended God, and that now having been absolved and returned to the fold of the church, he has spoken the truth in everything he has been asked. His declaration being read to him, he affirmed and ratified all of it. He declared himself to be eighty years of age, and he signed it with his lordship and the interpreters and assisting witnesses, before me, the secretary.

ANTONIO DE OTERMÍN (rubric); PEDRO NARANJO; NICOLÁS RODRIGUEZ REY (rubric); JUAN LUCERO DE GODOY (rubric); JUAN Ruiz DE CASARES (rubric); PEDRO DE LEIVA (rubric); SEBASTIÁN DE HERRERA (rubric); JUAN DE NORIEGA GARCÍA (rubric); Luis DE GRANILLO (rubric); JUAN DE LUNA Y PADILLA (rubric). Before me, FRANCISCO XAVIER, secretary of government and war (rubric).

Charles Wilson Hackett, *Revolt of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico and Otermin's Attempted Reconquest, 1680–1682* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1942), Volume 2: 245–49.

[5]

## The Talon Brothers Describe Texas

### **Talon Brothers Interview on Texas, 1697**

**Pierre and Jean-Baptiste Talon were two French boys who survived Salle's attempt to colonize the Texas coast during the 1680s. After their rescue, the two boys went to live in Mexico City and became wards of the Viceroy of New Spain. Years later, the French navy captured the two boys on a Spanish ship and interviewed the two in 1697.**

**"On the fruits and tender vegetation this land produces."**

When describing the nature of this region, mention was made of some of the fruits found there, like nuts, berries, etc. to which one can add red and white grapes, for there are a great many vines in the woods, whose vinestocks are much larger than those of Europe and whose branches climb very high on most trees; but those grapes are sour, since they grow wild and are not cultivated.

Besides the ordinary nuts, there are some extremely large ones. There are also hazelnuts in quantity, and certain fruits called figs, but which are not like the figs of Europe. They are very much like the banana. There is also a prodigious quantity of berries with delicious taste that are good to eat and on which, as well as on the grapes, diverse species of small birds feed; and there are also several kinds of native fruits of which they know neither the name of characteristics. But there is one among the others that is extremely refreshing. It is shaped like an egg and

grows on bushes with thorns. The Spaniards eat it and value it very much. They call it "tuna."

The whole country produces maize or corn, potatoes, gourds, pumpkins, and beans of several kinds. Sieur de la Salle had some sowed and cultivated at his dwelling and had some grain brought from the Ceniz village.

The soil there appears everywhere suitable for producing all sorts of grains and vegetables if one were to sow them there; however, it does not rain very much in that country.

There are many bees in the fields that make their honey in the grass and in trees. But the savages do not cultivate them, contenting themselves with eating the honey wherever they find it.

Tobacco could be grown there because the Ceniz cultivate some, though very little, and only for their own use. There is red pepper in quantity.

The said Talons also speak a great deal about a kind of strong-smelling root, which is common in all the country and which is related to ginger. The natives believe this root has the virtue of making the hair grow; and in view of this, they rub their heads with it after having chewed it.

They believe also there is cotton, but are unable to give any details.

It is believed that there one could gather and process turtles, there being an abundance of turtles of all sorts, large and small, aquatic and land, whose flesh is perfectly good to eat.

The savages have nothing to barter but buffalo and deer skins, which they dress like chamois skins and make soft as cloth, despite the fact that the cattle of this country (buffalo) are much larger than those of Europe.

There will be presently a quantity of runaway or wild pigs all over the country, the French having released some that had already reproduced prodigiously by the time the Talons left there. The savages do not eat them, saying they are the dogs of the French, which they imagined because they have not known dogs other than the wolves they capture when very small, tame, and train for the hunt.

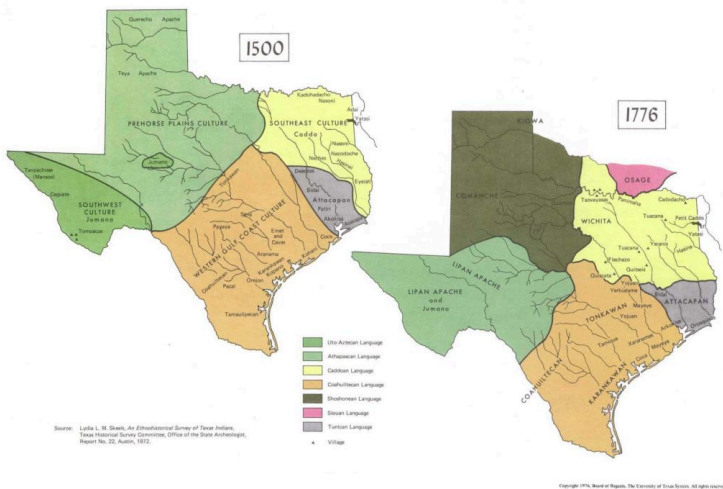
The ordinary hens that were in the French settlement before the massacre...have multiplied considerably. The savages

have not had the same aversion for these chickens as for the pigs because they eat them without hesitation and find them good. There would be no lack of milk in this country if one took the trouble to tame the buffalo cows that give it in abundance. But the savages do not want to take the trouble, contenting themselves, when they have killed one, to suck at once all the milk she has.

According to the rather vague statements of the Talons, one can infer that there is salt, because they say the French used to gather a sort of white sand along the seashore and the banks of the saltwater ponds, which they boiled in water until it came to the consistency of salt, and with which they seasoned soups and meats. As for the savages, they use almost no salt, and to preserve their meat they simply dry them in the sun, after having cut them into very thin, round slices.

Weddle, Robert S. La Salle (editor). The Mississippi, and the Gulf: Three Primary Documents (College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 1987). Pages 225-258. [American Journeys: https://content.wisconsinhistory.org/digital/collection/aj/id/7692](https://content.wisconsinhistory.org/digital/collection/aj/id/7692)

ETHNOLINGUISTIC DISTRIBUTION OF NATIVE TEXAS INDIANS



From Atlas of Texas. Published by The University of Texas at Austin, Bureau of Business Research, 1976.

[6]

## Baptismal Records along the Colonial Rio Grande

These are some of the baptismal records of the colonial Catholic Church of Mier, Nuevo Santander, now Tamaulipas. This is adjacent to Roma, Texas and its residents lived across the region now in south Texas and northeastern Mexico.

**Joseph Ponciano Benavides**

*En esta Parrochia de Nra. Sra. de la Ima. Concepn. De Mier en el mes de Diciembre de este presente año de sesenta y ocho (1768) yo Fray Francisco Pérez mtro con veces de cura, Bap'te Solemnémente, puse los Santos oleos, y chrisma a Joseph Ponciano, mulato, nació el día Beinte y uno de Nob're. Hijo leg'mo de Ysidro Benavides y de María Olaya Rubio, vecinos de Revilla, fueron sus padrinos Antonio Gregorio Sánchez, hijo de Francisco Sánchez y de Lugarda Solis y Gertrudis Lerma, hija de Lisandro Lerma y de Thomasa Solis, ya quienes les adverti sus oblig'n y para que conste lo firme enesta fue dicha villa, dicho día mes, y año ut supra. Fr. Francisco Pérez*

In this Parish of Our Lady of Immaculate Conception of Mier, in the month of December of this present year of sixty eight (1768), I Friar Francisco Pérez, minister occupying the post of curate (he is a Franciscan missionary acting as a priest in a parish as opposed to a strictly missionary role), solemnly baptized, anointed with holy oils and chrism Joseph Ponciano, mulato (half African half Spanish), born the twenty-first day of

November. Legitimate son of Ysidro Benavides and María Olaya Rubio, *vecinos* (literally neighbors, but more akin to “citizens” of a specific town) of Revilla, his godparents were Antonio Gregorio Sánchez, son of Francisco Sánchez and Lugarda Solis and Gertrudis Lerma,, daughter of Lisandro Lerma and Thomasa Solis, whom I have informed of their obligations and in order to enter this into the record, I signed this in aforesaid town, on the day, month, and year that appears above. Fr. Francisco Pérez.

### **María López**

*En esta yglesia...mes de diciembre. Yo Francisco Pérez mntro de ella bap'té...María López (española) Yndia, de cinco años nacida, y de padres Gentiles, criada, y educada en las Casa de Don Luis López y de Doña Juana Rodríguez, fueron los padrinos Prudencio Garcia y Santos Garcia, su hermana, todos becinos de esta jurisdiccion, ya quienes les advertí su oblig'n y parentesco espiritual y para que conste....Pérez*

In this church..., I Francisco Pérez, its minister...baptized... María López (Spaniard is crossed out) Indian, five years of age, of Gentile (non-Christian Indian) parents, *criada* (a criado/a was a servant – this girl was likely taken as a captive during conflicts with groups such as Lipan Apache or Coahuilteca bands) and “educated” in the home of Don Luis López and Doña Juana Rodríguez (Don/doña were titles of social respect). The godparents were Prudencio García y Santos García, his sister, todos, all *vecinos* of this jurisdiction (Mier), who I have informed of their obligations and their spiritual relationships (to the baptized girl)... Pérez

### **Andrea Sánchez Rendón**

*En esta yglesia...mes de Diciembre....bap'te...Andrea, española, nacio el día diez de dicho mes, hija lég'ma de Miguel Sánchez, español, y de Efigenia Rendón, coyota, fueron sus padrinos, Prudencio Garcia y Santos Garcia, su hermana...*

In this church....I Francisco Pérez its minister....baptized...Andrea, Spaniard, born the tenth of December, legitimate daughter of Miguel Sánchez, Spaniard, and Efigenia Rendón, *coyota* (a woman with a Native American parent and a Mestizo parent), the godparents were Prudencio García and Santos García, his sister (the same as the godparents for María López)....

### **Francisco Xabier González**

*En esta Yglesia.... Francisco Xabier González, español, nació el día tres de dicho mes (Dic.), hijo l'g'mo de Juan Joseph González y de Clara Salinas, fueron sus padrinos Thomas Barrera y María Guadalupe Barrera su hija, todos españoles y becinos de esta jurisdicción...*

In this church...I Francisco Pérez its minister...baptized...Francisco Xabier González, Spaniard, born the third of December, legitimate child of Juan Joseph González and Clara Salinas, his godparents were Thomas Barrera and María Guadalupe Barrera, his daughter, all Spaniards and *vecinos* of this jurisdiction (Mier).

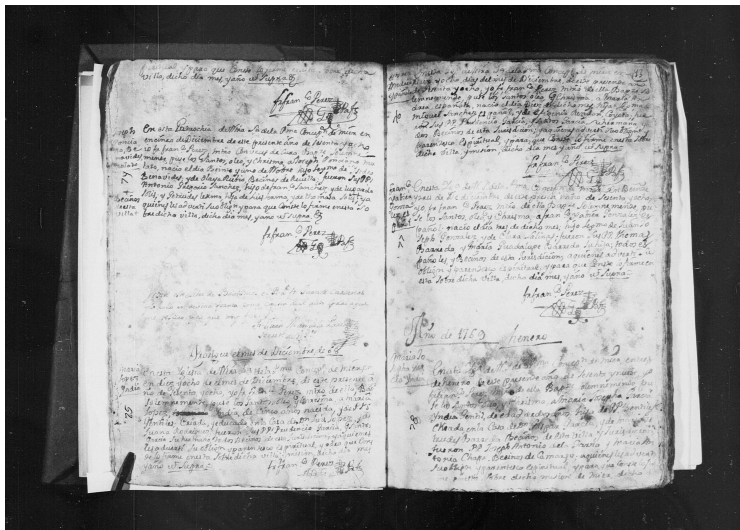
### **María Josepha García**

*En la yglesia...en tres de henero, año de sesenta y nueve, yo Francisco Pérez mntro de ella Baptte....María Jospeha García, Yndia Gentil, de edad de dos años, hija de padres Gentiles y criada en la casa de Don Joseph García y de Maria Gertrudis Barrera, becinos de esta villa y jurisdicción, fueron Padrinos Joseph Antonio de la Garza y Maria Antonia Chapa, Becinos de Camargo....*

In this church on the third of January year of sixty nine (1769)...I Francisco Pérez its minister...baptized...María Josepha García, “Gentile Indian,” two years of age and a servant in the house of Don Joseph García and Maria Gertrudis Barrera, *vecinos*, of this town and jurisdiction (Mier), the godparents were Joseph Antonio de la Garza and María Antonia Chapa, *vecinos* of Camargo...

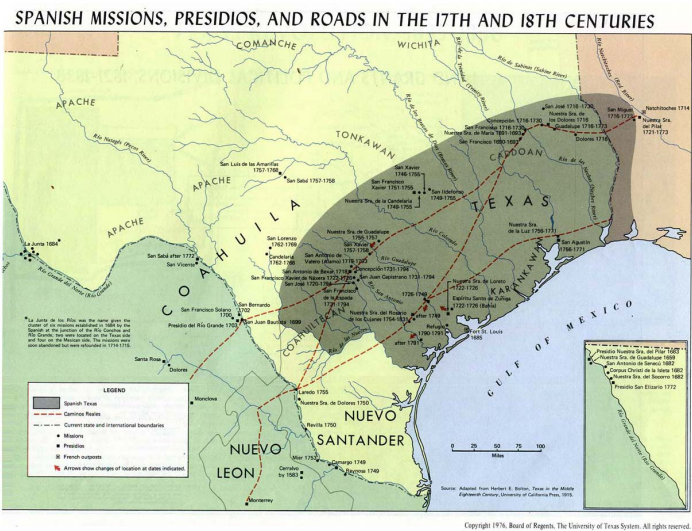
This is a frame from the microfilmed parish records. These can be accessed on the “Family Search” website.





[7]

# Slave Sales Reported in Spanish San Antonio



From Atlas of Texas. Published by The University of Texas at Austin, Bureau of Business Research, 1976.

Slave Records filed at San Antonio de Béjar. These are from the files of the Spanish archives of Texas. These documents described the sale of slaves in Spanish colonies, including Texas and Nuevo León.

At the real of Santiago de las Sabinas, in the jurisdiction of the Nuevo Reino de León, on the eleventh of April, 1788, before me, Don Luis María de Yparraguirre, lieutenant alcalde mayor and captain of war for this aforesaid town and its territory, and before the participating witnesses who will be indicated, there appeared in this, my tribunal, the person of Don Jose Vicente Lozano, a citizen of this town, whom I certify to know. He said that he was granting and selling by royal sale to Don Ysidro Treviño, a citizen of the town of Boca de Leones, a mulata slave woman, raised in his own house, called María del Carmel Ramirez.

She of Moorish color, twenty-one years of age, and has no illness other than being pregnant, with no disease whatsoever. She was offered under the circumstances and conditions which are stated above in this document, issued on the eleventh day of the present month of April, at the price of one hundred sixty pesos in common gold, which [Lozano] received to his satisfaction, it having been delivered to him in its entirety in the presence of myself, the aforesaid magistrate, and of the participants and my attesting [witnesses]. He declared that this is the fair value of the aforesaid mulatto slave woman, and that if the afore-named mulatto woman be worth a higher price, he will make a pure and perfect gift of her added value to the buyer. And said Don Jose Vicente Lozano declares that he renounces all the laws of royal regulations, and for greater assurance and greater validity at that price, he obligated and does obligate his person, as well as whatever may be recognized as his property, current and future. And under said obligation, he formalized it according to law, under the clause *judicio fisci judicatum solvi* (bond for payment), along with all the other customary clauses. From “this day forth, forever, he relinquishes his power and desists from the rights of patronage, possession, and command which he had over the aforesaid slave woman. He cedes, renounces, and transfers all to the aforesaid buyer and to whomsoever might represent his interests, so that this woman will be his slave and will be subject to his service. Having her as such, he may sell or dispose of her according to his will, such that he will not be subject to any suit whatsoever in that regard...Instrumental witnesses were Don Cayetano

Dominguez, Don Blas María Dominguez, and Don Jose María Ibarra... Witnesses: Luis Marla de Yparraguirre, José Ramon de las Casas, José Vicente Lozano, Pedro Flores, April 11, 1788.

“Slave Sales,” Spanish Archives of Texas, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin, Box 005113.

[https://www.cah.utexas.edu/projects/bexar/gallery\\_doc.php?doc=e\\_bx\\_005113](https://www.cah.utexas.edu/projects/bexar/gallery_doc.php?doc=e_bx_005113)

### **Slave Sale in San Antonio**

On January 24, 1792, be it known by this letter that I, Julian de Arocha, a citizen as I am of this villa of San Fernando and royal presidio of San Antonio de Bexar, declare that I am selling and giving in royal sale to Jose Granados, a soldier and squad corporal of the company of the aforesaid royal presidio of San Antonio de Bexar, a female slave of mine held and purchased from Doña Antonia Morales, as is shown in the preceding document. Her name is María Candelaria Fierro, whose color and characteristics are those stated in the aforesaid document, upon whom I have a mortgage for an amount of pesos that by way of a loan I owe to Captain Don Antonio Gil Ybarbo, and since the term [of the loan] is now expired, I sell in alienation and transfer to the aforesaid buyer my afore-mentioned slave for the price and amount of one hundred fifty pesos, as well as a son of the aforesaid slave woman, named José Bonifacio, aged six years and of dark color. They have not committed any criminal offenses for which they would deserve corporal punishment; they are free of all disease, public or secret; they are not fugitives, or thieves, or drunks, nor have any other defect or faults that might impede them from serving well. The price for the little slave boy is the amount of seventy pesos, which together with the value of his aforesaid mother and my slave, Maria Candelaria, comes to a total of two hundred twenty pesos, for which I state that I am paid and satisfied, declaring, as in fact I declare, it is the fair price for the afore-mentioned slaves, and that if [the price] were higher, however much more it might be, I will make of it a pure, perfect, and final donation to the buyer (which the law calls *inter vivos*), and I renounce the law of royal ordinance [ordenamiento] and the four-year protection against fraud...And for its validation, they signed it

with me on the aforesaid day, month, and year, along with witnesses Don Manuel Delgado and Don Francisco Bueno, and the my attesting witnesses, with whom I act in receivership, as has been stated. This I swear. [In margin: Julián de Arocha, Salvador Rodrigues Attesting, Manuel Delgado Attesting Francisco Bueno, Manuel Granados witness].

["Slave Sales," Spanish Archives of Texas, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin, Box 006539.](#)

[8]

## Thomas Jefferson Letters to Bernardo Gálvez

**Thomas Jefferson, acting as the diplomatic representative of Virginia, wrote Bernardo de Gálvez, Spain's governor in Louisiana and commanding general of forces of the Gulf Theater. The first letter describes the potential for trade, requests for loans, and proposes border crossings.**

To Bernardo de Gálvez

Williamsburg November 8th. 1779

Sir

...Our Vicinity to the State over which you immediately preside; the direct channel of Commerce by the River Mississippi, the nature of those Commodities with which we can reciprocally furnish each other, point out the advantages which may result from a close Connection, and correspondence, for which on our part the best Foundations are laid by a grateful Sense of the Favors we have received at your Hands. Notwithstanding the pressure of the present War on our people, they are lately beginning to extend their Settlements rapidly on the Waters of the Mississippi; and we have reason to believe, that on the Ohio particularly, and the Branches immediately communicating with it, there will in the Course of another Year, be such a number of Settlers, as to render the Commerce an object worth your notice. From New Orleans alone can they be

tolerably supplied with necessities of European Manufactures, and thither they will carry in Exchange Staves (lumber) and Peltry (animal hides) immediately, and Flour pork and Beef, as soon as they shall have somewhat opened their Lands. For their Protection from the Indians, we are obliged to send and station among them, a considerable armed Force; the providing of which with cloathing, and the Friendly Indians with necessities, becomes a matter of great Difficulty with us...

With this view Governor (Patrick) Henry in his Letters of January 14 and 26th 1778 solicited from Your Nation a loan of money which your Excellency was so kind, as to undertake to communicate to Your Court. The Success of this application we expect to learn by Col. Rogers, and should not till then have troubled you with the same Subject, had we not heard of Mr. Pollock's distress. As we flatter ourselves that the Application thro' the intervention of your Excellency may have been successful, and that you may be authorized to advance for us some loans in money, I take the Liberty of soliciting you in such Case, to advance for us to Mr. Pollock Sixty five Thousand Eight Hundred fourteen &  $\frac{2}{3}$  Dollars. Encompassed as we are with Difficulties, we may fail in doing as much as our Gratitude would prompt us to, in speedily replacing these Aids; But most assuredly nothing in that way within our Power will be left undone...

By Col. Rogers I hope also to learn your Excellency's Sentiments, on the Other proposition in the Same Letters, for the establishment of corresponding Posts on Your Side and ours of the Mississippi, near the mouth of the Ohio, for the promotion of Commerce Between us. After returning our most cordial thanks to your Excellency for the friendly Disposition you have personally shewn to us, and, assuring you of our profound Respect and Esteem, beg Leave to Subscribe myself, Your Excellency's most obedient, and most humble Servant,

TH: JEFFERSON

"From Thomas Jefferson to Bernardo de Gálvez, 8 November 1779," Founders Online, National Archives, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-03-02-0174>The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, vol. 3, 18 June

1779–30 September 1780, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951, pp. 167–170.

**A second letter by Jefferson to Gálvez, January 29, 1780. This describes the loss of Spanish aid and a request for further help.**

<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-27-02-0609>

To Bernardo de Gálvez

Williamsburg January 29th. 1780.

Sir

I had the Honor of writing to your Excellency the last month expressing hopes that by the return of Colo. (David) Rogers we should receive information on the Subject of a Loan of Money formerly solicited through the intervention of your Excellency by my Predecessor Governor (Patrick) Henry.

Colo. Rogers however was unhappily surprised and killed on his return by the Indians together with about 20 others of his escort and with them we lost a valuable Cargo of Goods formerly carried for us from New Orleans to St. Louis and then going under his care up the Ohio. I thought it necessary to Notify this unfortunate event to your Excellency, that if you should have sent by him any dispatches for this Government you might be apprised of their fate and repair the Loss by taking the trouble of transmitting duplicates. I have the Honor to be with every Sentiment of Esteem and respect Your Excellency's most Obedt. & most humble Servant

TH: JEFFERSON

“From Thomas Jefferson to Bernardo de Gálvez, 29 January 1780,” Founders Online, National Archives, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-27-02-0609>

The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, vol. 27, 1 September–31 December 1793, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997, p. 688.



[9]

## Felix Calleja's Inspection of Nuevo Santander

**1795 Spanish official Felix Calleja inspected Nuevo Santander and wrote an extended report. His comments about the people reflect his prejudices toward people living in frontier zones and racially diverse communities. A significant outcome of this report was the expansion of the port of Matamoros and increased trade from this area's ranches.**

### **Calleja's Report on Nuevo Santander**

The province of Nuevo Santander is located between 23° 23' and 28 ° 15' North Latitude, and between 276° 25' and 279° 15; Longitude. It is bounded on the north by Texas, or rather by the Indian enemies that are interposed, and on the east by the coast of the Seno Mexicano (Gulf of Mexico). On the south and west the Sierra Madre and the subdelegations of Tampico, Villa de Valles, and Charcas, and the gobiernos of Monterrey and Coahuila encircle it. Its climate is hot, notwithstanding that in winter it freezes and is very cold during the periods when the northers (northern cold fronts) furiously lash it. Moisture comes with very little regularity. The droughts and rains are excessive, and in one or the other case health suffers, and livestock and crops are ruined.

The land is immensely level with the exceptions of the sierras of the Tamaulipa Oriental, which is inhabited by 'savage

Indians' and of Tamaulipas Occidental, which is settled. Both mountain ranges emanate from the Sierra Madre, although separated by a large interval, the first in the south of the province and the second almost in the center.

The terrain is loose and spongy, and in many areas claylike, and extraordinarily fertile. Virgin and uncultivated, the soil is suitable for all types of planting, though the seasons cannot be determined because of the irregularity of rainfall and the absence of irrigation because of the lack of ponds, tanks, dams, or anything that would make it possible. The country is even better suited to the production of all species of livestock.

Thirteen rivers supply it, which could make it uniformly productive if advantage were taken of their waters...The Rio Grande, flowing a long and undetermined distance, has no ford (crossing) except in dry years or at a great distance from the coast. It measures 150 varas (Spanish 'yards') in its narrowest portions, and in the months from April to October, more than 300, rising six or eight spans (c. 4.5-6 feet) with a uniform and constant rate occasioned by melting ice and rainfall held and dammed in the mountain gorges through which it flows that permit only the quantity that they contain to pass through. As it enters the sea the river becomes contrary, extended, muddy, but little sheltered, and with greater depth than its two mouths, the northern of which is shallow, dangerous, and useless, and the southern of which is twelve spans (c. nine feet) in depth ordinarily and is clean and wide...

The entire coast is clean beach and so shallow that for a distance of more than a league (roughly two miles), the depth does not exceed six fathoms (c. 36 feet). The coast is full of lagoons, which are interconnected in rainy seasons. The lagoons obstruct the approach to the sea by land for a distance of a league and a half. The sea interposes sand dunes which form bars as they break. All of the lagoons produce fish and salt in such abundance that the amount that could be taken annually is incalculable....the salt from the lagoons near San Fernando (south of the Rio Grande) are a monopoly to the account of the royal treasury with a tax of twelve reales (\$1.50 in Spanish pesos) for each load that is taken from them.

Salinas (salt lakes) situated twelve leagues north of Reynosa,

which are also a monopoly and include many that extend toward Texas from which salt is no longer produced, are not only better but very special. Their beds are solid masses of coagulated salt that the rains do not liquify. Blocks are taken out as from a quarry, and salt has been known to coagulate to a depth of two varas. In some districts it is the color of mother-of-pearl; and branches of trees or birds that accidentally die and fall in them are transformed in a period of twenty-four hours to salt, maintaining their figures...

#### Population, Property, and Industry

In the province are one city, 25 villas (towns), three mining districts, 17 haciendas (large estates), eight missions attached to parishes (i.e. churches in towns), and four independent missions (churches that serve Indians). Inhabiting the region are 30,405 Europeans (this includes Spaniards, Creoles, Mestizos and Mulatos), 1,434 Christian Indians, and 2,190 Gentiles (unbaptized Indians) of both sexes and all ages. They possess 92,198 mares (female horses), 37,501 horses (male horses), 28,800 mules, 8,621 burros, 111,777 head of large livestock (essentially cattle), and 539,711 animals to produce mohair and wool (goats and sheep): the total is 799,874.

The city and villas, without police, jails, treasuries, missions, funds, nor any public works, are formed of jacales of straw with only a few ill-constructed houses made of stronger building materials.

The haciendas and ranches are segments of land without limits nor landmarks in which each settler has his stock. He changes the stock when he wishes and moves the hacienda to another location. Few of the settlers have fixed boundaries, though each was assigned his own. In the disorder to which all contribute, this indeterminate right of property has been established or at least accepted as a workable system. It discourages each owner from caring for his own property. This province should regulate the 11,250 square leagues of surface land in which the settlers wander at their own whim with their herds, making it all useless. In the beginning the lands were open, with excellent pastures and an abundance of water. At present those immediately surrounding the settlements are not serviceable for the production of horses. Water is scarce because

the large and small livestock transport huisache seed from one part to another, causing new huisache growth that the owners have not taken the trouble to uproot, and because those same herds of cattle in great numbers daily trample the springs of water, compressing the land underfoot and forcing the water to run laterally a great distance, so that at present there are only the rivers to supply water.

This frequent migration does not favor the formation and development of towns, for the people lack houses and furniture, utensils, and tools to accomplish such an end.

Their occupations are limited all year to branding. In a very few towns some seeds are sown, which, in spite of their scarcity, are adequate for local consumption because of the small demand, the people's diet being ordinarily meat, fruit, and milk.

Industry is limited to the extraction of salt and the preparation of hides.

Commerce is purely barter among the people or with peddlers, with whom the exchange mules for goods.

In character and customs, the people are lazy, dissipated, with relative luxury in their dress, arms, and horses, pusillanimous (cowardly), captious, and sarcastic murmurers, all stemming from the fact that this population was formed from among the vagabonds and malefactors of others.

The eight missions attached to the parishes have made no advances in religion and it has been difficult. To improve customs because they themselves are such bad examples. The four independent missions are the only ones on a footing that appears promising.

#### Proposals for Improvement

The most useful and necessary measures for developing the provinces, after first freeing them for the extortions of their enemies (i.e. Indian raids), are those which facilitate both the exportation of surplus products and the importation of needed goods which are lacking. The exportation of the one will develop and augment the cultivation of goods, while the importation of the other will make subsistence less expensive and more comfortable, will attract more immigrants, and, with the commerce of ideas and customs as well as goods, will improve those who are already here. Also, the avenues of

improvement which they are not now observing or of which the people are ignorant will be advanced and quickened....

An improved port

Through this port goods could be exported that are now of little value, not being able to support the cost of fleets or the conduct of shipments...with their slaughter, meats, waxes, lard, soap, and hides could be shipped through the port. To be sure, the sellers could now take their products to Veracruz, but in that single port, flooded with goods, the products would be sold with little profit, and much expense would be involved to register them and transship them to another market...

If they were permitted to take the animals to Havana, they could triple the price and in return bring back goods that are transported 360 leagues by land. The Cuban sugar mills, in which a bad mule costs 100 pesos, would be better served by having a good mule for 60 pesos, and Cuba would get a better price for selling its sugar abroad.

The Rio Grande seems to be navigable to Laredo, 100 leagues distant from the sea and very close to the four provinces. Its bar and all its course, though of twelve spans in depth with little less even in times of drought, can never permit passage of the larger ships that would bring commerce. Its waters extend a great distance into the Laguna Madre which is at its mouth, and the shelter of the port begins at the mouth of the river. I have been along its coast, and although I have not been able to make a detailed reconnaissance, I have found no obstacle that would impede its navigation. If this were to be made an auxiliary free port, it seems to me it would be the channel to the abundant peopling and prosperity of the four provinces of Texas, Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Nuevo Santander.

Felix Calleja, translated by David M. Vigness, "Nuevo Santander in 1795: A Provincial Inspection by Félix Calleja." *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 75, no. 4 (1972): 461-506.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/30236739>



1792 Map of Nuevo Santander.

[10]

## Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara's Constitution of Texas

**In 1813, Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara, a blacksmith from Revilla (now Guerrero) in the lower Rio Grande region, drafted a provisional constitution of Texas. This was part of a broader revolution against Spanish colonial rule across the Americas.**

### **THE CONSTITUTION OF TEXAS APRIL 17, 1813**

1. The province of Texas shall henceforth be known only as the State of Texas, forming part of the Mexican Republic, to which it remains inviolably joined.

2. Our Holy Religion will remain unchanged in the way it is now established, and the laws will be duly executed unless they are expressly and publicly revoked or altered in the manner herein prescribed.

3. Private property and possessions will be inviolable, and will never be taken for public use except in urgent cases of necessity, in which instances the proprietor will be duly recompensed.

4. From today henceforward personal liberty will be held sacred. No man will be arrested for any crime without a formal accusation made in the proper form under oath being first presented. No man will be placed before the Tribunal without first having been examined by the witnesses. Neither will any man be deprived of life without having been heard completely [in court], an exception being made from this rule during the

time of the present War in the case of criminals of the Republic, whose punishments will be decided by the junta in accord with the Governor in order to assure the firmness of an Establishment and to protect the people.

5. The Governor selected by the Junta will be Commander-in-Chief of the military forces of the State, but he will undertake no campaign personally without having received the order of the Junta. In such a case, the Governor will provide the necessary means for maintaining the obligations of Government during his absence. Also under his charge will be the establishment of laws pertaining to the organization of the Army, the naming of military officials, and the ratifying of the commissions and ranks of those already employed. He shall be entrusted with the defense of the Country, foreign relations, execution of the laws, and preservation of order. He will have a right to one secretary, two aides-de-camp, three clerks for the Spanish language, and one for English.

6. The salaries of the Governor and the other Civil and Military officials will be fixed as promptly as possible and will be assured by law.

7. There shall be a Treasurer whose function shall be to receive and to preserve intact the Public Funds, keeping them at the disposal of the Government.

8. The City of San Fernando (now in San Antonio) will be the seat of government and the residence of all public officials. It will be governed by two mayors and four District Commissioners selected by the Junta.

9. The Cabildo will be entrusted with the policing of the interior of the city, and will have all the authority necessary to fulfill its purpose. The mayors shall each have power to judge cases in their jurisdiction and shall appoint the necessary officials and indicate the days for the hearing. Their judgments shall be governed by the established law on the individual cases.

10. Each town in the State will be governed by a military officer named by the Governor, and this officer will be required to follow whatever rules are deemed necessary by the Junta.

11. It shall be the obligation of the Cabildo and the military commandants [of the towns] to present to the Governor an



exact census of the population of their respective districts and to establish schools in each city or town.

12. The Junta shall have the power to dismiss any officials it has nominated should it deem such a procedure necessary.

13. There shall be a Superior Audiencia which will be composed of a Judge well versed in law appointed by the Junta. He will have the functions of taking the necessary measures for maintaining peace and good order, of trying all criminal cases, of deciding cases in which the sentence or amount in controversy exceeds 1000 pesos. This tribunal will name its officials, fixing the time and place of its session, and its emoluments will be determined by laws set up for that purpose. It will be the duty of the tribunal in trying persons accused of murder to name five of the most discreet and intelligent citizens of the district who shall swear to perform their duty in justice both to the State and to the defendant, and to assist the Judge in reaching a fair verdict. It shall also be the duty of the tribunal to establish a code of criminal law and methods of procedure, so that all crimes might have their respective punishments and might be clearly and promptly defined. Once approved by the Junta, this will be the law of the Land and will be published for the benefit of the People. No one shall be punished for having committed any crime or offense which the law has not provided for.

14. Any change or alteration in the laws in force at present will be effected by the Junta and will be made known to the People.

15. The Junta will meet to hold its sessions in the capital one day each week, or oftener if some matter is urgent. It shall preserve all powers granted it by the people, and will have as its obligation to keep close watch and care diligently for the welfare of the State, to alter or amend these regulations that becomes necessary, to preside in matters dealing with war and the various branches of foreign relations, and finally, to do everything in its power for the benefit of the great cause of Mexican independence.

16. The Junta will take notice of any enemy property found within its jurisdiction and will resolve whatever it deems fitting with regard to it.

17. The Commander-in-Chief, Governor-elect of this State,

will use every available means and will do everything in his power to facilitate the carrying out of all obligations contracted by him in the name of the Mexican Republic.

18. The Junta, with the Governor of the State, by common agreement will proceed to the election of the necessary number of delegates to the general Mexican congress and to foreign countries.

Garrett, Kathryn. "The First Constitution of Texas, April 17, 1813." *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 40, no. 4 (1937): 290-308. Accessed December 24, 2020. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30235736>.

[11]

## Niles Register, article on Nuevo Santander and Texas

**This article, published in a Baltimore magazine, Niles Register, in 1816, reveals U.S. impressions of Nuevo Santander and Texas, including what is now the Rio Grande Valley, during the last years of Spanish colonial rule.**

New Santander lies on the north-east (of Mexico). It is 140 leagues from north to south and 70 from east to west (a league is three miles, however, it is unclear here whether this is in English or Spanish measurement). It lies on the Gulf of Mexico, and has the ports of Altamiro, Soto de la Marina, and Carboneras. The principal rivers are Pilancita, Baranca, Real de Borbon, Alamos, Hayas, and the Rio del Norte (Rio Grande). The climate of the interior is cool, the rest of the province is hot, but in general healthy, being refreshed by the sea breezes, which never fail during the summer months. Its forests produce all the valuable kinds of American timber, and one kind in particular, the stone tree, from the tendency its wood has to petrify in water. Many parts abound with tea, indigo, wild cochineal, sassaaparilla, and a variety of valuable medicinal plants. The common metals are more plentiful than in any of the other provinces, besides, both gold and silver are indicated, though on account of the wretched management of the government, they are neglected.

Texas is above 300 leagues in length and 100 in breadth Its

eastern boundary is the Gulf of Mexico and the Sabine River – the western boundary of Louisiana state. The streams are very numerous, of which the chief are the Nueces, Guadalupe, Colorado, Brazos de Dios, Trinidad, Naches, Nacogdoches, Sabine, and Ride River or Natchitoches, on whose banks is the town of that name, the first in Louisiana. From the Rio Grande northward to the Trinidad, the country abounds with pasturage, but beyond the latter river commence the great pine forests, whose soil is generally a dry sand. The climate of Texas is healthy, though hot in summer, and so cold in winter that they have snow. The productions are nearly the same as in the other Mexican provinces, except that it does not seem to contain any of the precious metals or much of the useful ones.

In New Santander, is the city of Horcasitas, the reales (mines) of San Nicolas and Santiago de Borbon, of which the latter contains about 3000 inhabitants. There are reckoned 76 towns, among which is San Carlos, Hayos, Altamira, Aguayo, Laredo, Revilla, Mier, Camargo, Reynosa, and San Juan (Matamoras). The inhabitants are estimated at 60,000, although it begun to be settled only about the middle of the last century.

The principal towns of Texas are San Fernando (now in San Antonio), Real Presidio de San Antonio de Bejar, la Bahia (Goliad), and Nacogdoches. The government of the provinces consists of a mixture of civil and military power, wretchedly managed. A commandant-general. A commandant-general, independent of the Viceroy of Mexico, has the direction of military matters in the two provinces of Coahuila and Texas. Under him are two governors, who have cognizance of all causes (i.e. judicial powers in all areas). But the police is regulated by the commandant general, and financial matters by the intendant of San Luis Potosi Appeals in civil causes are to the Royal Audience of New Galicia (in Guadalajara), 600 leagues from the commandant's residence. New Leon and New Santander have each a military and civil governor, possessing absolute power, except that they are controllable in matters relative to war and police by the Viceroy of Mexico, two hundred – and to some – three hundred leagues distant; and in matters of finance by the intendant of San Luis Potosi, with appeal to the supreme council of Mexico.

The uncontrollable governors, for practically they all are so, are promoted from the rank of captain, major, or colonel at most; and of course are scandalously ignorant of law, and of civil matters generally, for in that country, they begin their military education at boyhood, and neglect all other kinds of learning. Their commissions can only be procured by intrigue, bribery, and vile humiliation, and when procured, their salaries are not half adequate to their support; they find themselves, therefore, on entering the duties of their posts, compelled to adopt the usual system of corruption, or abandon the commissions for which probably all their wealth has been expended. They are obliged to become the tools of rich, influential scoundrels, and make a traffic of the forms of justice, or else sink at once. Which alternative such men will choose is easily imagined. There is no other such government in the world, as this; the most lawless chieftain of a savage horde has some check on his conduct – his power must depend upon the acquiescence of the multitude or upon some authority that can correct: but here no one dare appeal to the only powers that could afford redress for injuries. The tribunals of appeal are from 100 to 600 leagues from the people that would choose to resort to them. “I have,” says don M. R. Arispe, “many times known respectable and useful citizens to suffer such scandalous vexations, and even die broken-hearted, finding it impossible to vindicate their honor, or recover their property” “I have,” he says, “seen the families of those who have undertaken to defend themselves totally ruined in consequence.”

There is a self-organizing power that pervades everything, tending everywhere to the production of the system. So here there is a necessary co-operation among the possessor of power to retain vice and stupidity in every department, and ignorance and meanness among every portion of the people. Our readers would be tired and indignant were we to attempt a detail of the many grievances which de Arispe’s work so fully exposes; it is just sufficient to say, that as all power among them takes a military character, all offices are filled by that class—“captains of companies being perpetual judges, the lieutenants sole regidores, and the sarjeants attourneys-general; with the original provision, that the exercise of these employments shall

follow the course provided by the military ordinances. This, a sarjeant or a corporal may become a judge in the absence of his superiors. This is generally the case, if not otherwise ordered by the governor, which very seldom happens.

But the worst scourge of these provinces is their mercantile system. In the whole kingdom of Mexico there is but one free port, La Vera Cruz .At Cadiz (Spain), goods are received from England and elsewhere, at second-hand; in Vera Cruz at the third, in Mexico, at Queretaro or Zacatecas in the fourth, and in the great fair of Saltillo at the fifth, where they are distributed through these provinces; and, at the towns where they are sold finally, at the sixth hand. Besides all the expences of such enourmously circuitous carriage, together with freight, duties, etc. there is a tax called alcavala paid on every sale. The amount of this imposition varies from  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent and applies to everything foreign and domestic – even their garden stuffs are not exempt. What must be the supply of that country whose goods are carried a thousand leagues and subjected to an extortioning monopoly, together with a frightful multiplication of charges.

We are informed that this don M.R. de Arispe, curate of Borbon, who dared to present to the Spanish government a picture of the despotism under which these regions groaned, was expelled from the Cortes (Spanish Parliament), of which he was a member, and outlawed by the still more unprincipled government which has succeeded that body, and that a return to those his native provinces is precluded by nature of his account of the constituted authorities there: that no country remains to him, and therefore he is now a wanderer in the United States. He is a man of excellent talents and learning, but possessed an ardent love of country, unsuitable to the times in places in which he has the misfortune to live.

Niles Weekly Register, Baltimore, Saturday August 17, 1816, 403-404.

[12]

## Juana de Dios Machado de Ridington's Interview

**This is Thomas Savages's interview of Juana de Dios Machado de Ridington of California in 1878. The first part has her childhood memories of Mexican independence. The second part is about her experiences in the U.S.-Mexico War.**

"I Juana de Diós Machado was born in the old presidio of San Diego. I do not remember the day, the month, or the year, but I believe I am about sixty-four years old. My father, José Manuel Machado, was a corporal in the San Diego company. My mother, María Serafina Valdés, was born in Santa Bárbara. I believe that my father was born in Los Ángeles, because his father was also a soldier. I knew my paternal grandfather.

I was married to Dámaso Alipás for five years. My marriage to Dámaso Alipás took place in the presidio on August 22, 1829. Father Antonio Menéndez married us. I had been widowed for four or five years when I married Mr. Thomas Ridington, a native of Massachusetts.

My father was one of the founders of Pala, Las Flores, and Temécula. He also served at San Luis Rey. When I was young, it was customary for the commander of San Diego to assign a sergeant, a corporal, and ten soldiers to Mission San Luis Rey each year. After those troops had served there for a year, they would be relieved by another similar group. After Lieutenant

Colonel Echeandía came to govern the country, the mission guard was reduced to a corporal and five soldiers. That same number of troops maintained order at each of the missions from San Gabriel on down.

Later, during General Figueroa's administration, military headquarters were established at San Gabriel. Lieutenant Colonel Nicolás Gutiérrez was in command at San Gabriel. I was probably about eight to ten years old at that time and still at the old presidio.

When married soldiers like my father served in the mission guard, they would take their families with them. When my dear mother would be far along in a pregnancy and close to giving birth, she would give herself enough time to go to the presidio and stay at the home of Alférez Ignacio Martínez. He was married to Doña María Martina Arellanes. They were my godparents. I was baptized in the same old presidio, where one can still see the ruins of the buildings.

When I was eight or ten years old, my father left to command an expedition of twenty-five men. At that time, he was in charge of the Rancho de la Nación, which belonged to the presidio of San Diego. The purpose of the expedition was to go in pursuit of Indian horse thieves. At that time, three Indian criminals were famous for their offenses. Their names were Martín, Cartucho, and Agustín. Martín and Agustín were most likelt runaway Christian Indians. I do not know about Cartucho. They all came by way of Jacum.

The expedition went as far as the entrance to the Cañón de Jacum, which is a very narrow place. Indian allies of the runaways were on the two hills. However, only the three leaders had been involved in stealing the herd of horses from the Rancho de la Nación. The soldiers managed to catch sight of the horses but were not able to recover them.

My father and his soldiers engaged in a very hard-fought battle with the Indians. Agustín grabbed hold of my father by his braided hair and pulled him down from his horse. Fortunately, one of the soldiers came to my father's aid. That soldier was José Antonio Silvas, better known as Pico Silvas. My father was then able to take out his knife and bury it in the Indians belly. He ripped out all of his guts and left him for dead.



My father also cut off his ears and scalped him, which was what they use to do then. When my father returned, he presented these items to the commander of San Diego. The other Indians fled to the mountains and the herd of horses was lost. The only horse they were able to bring back was the one Agustín was riding.

Shortly before the expedition commanded by my father headed out, I witnessed the changing of the flag. This was when the Spanish flag was lowered, and the Mexican flag was raised in its place. Up until that time, for a number of years the soldiers and their families had suffered many hardships due to a lack of clothing and other things. Supplies from the king were not arriving because of the war of independence in Mexico. However, we did not lack food, because there was an abundance of cattle and other animals. It got to the point that we were used to eating only the finest and most succulent meat. The rest of the meat was thrown away or we would give it to the Indians if they were around. The women had their own shoe-making operation in their homes. They would makes shoes out of scraps of cowhide and fabric. When the ships began to arrive, the hardships experienced because of the huge shortages of necessary goods and luxury items began to lessen. The ships would bring us chocolate, clothing, and other things. But thus was very much toward the end.

The change of flags was in 1822.

Around that same time I met a woman named Apolinaria Lorenzana. Everyone called her “La Beata” or the “Blessed One.” She never married. I know she is still living in Santa Bárbara at the home of Doña Trinidad Noriega. Doña Apolinaria arrived from Mexico with two other girls named Valenciana and Mariana. They were foundling children that the viceroy’s government sent to California. Valenciana and Mariana married and had large families. Doña Apolinaria dedicated her life to serving the Church and taking care of the Fathers at Mission San Diego. At the mission, parents would ask her if she would please teach their children how to read and write. She did not have a formal school but would dedicate as much time as she could to teaching. She was the godmother to a large number of children, as much to children of gente de razón as to Indian

children. Apolinaria Lorenzana was also a healer or curandera who treated the sick.

The change of flags was as follows. A señor canónigo named Don Valenín Fernández de San Vicente arrived from the north. I do not remember if he came by land or by sea. This man had been sent here by the Mexican Empire to establish the new order of things. He brought a chaplain or secretary with him; I am not sure what he was, because I do not remember ever seeing him dressed as a priest. I remember well that the canónigo's attire was really very striking and colorful. His outfit was reddish in color. Whenever some woman or girl would be taken aback by the splendor and colors of the outfit, she would ask "Who is that man?" Someone would answer, "the canónigo." Such a person had never been seen before in California. He and his companion stayed up at the home of the commander, Captain Francisco María Ruiz. He had been commander for many years.

The infantry, cavalry, and a few artillerymen were ordered to line up in formation in the presidio plaza. They placed the cannons outside the plaza, at the gate of the guardhouse, so that they would face the ocean. There was no flag pole. A corporal or a soldier held the Spanish flag in one hand and the Mexican flag in the other. Both of the flags were attached to little sticks. In the presence of Officer Don José María Estudillo, Commander Ruiz gave the cry "Long Live the Mexican Empire!" Then the Spanish flag was lowered and the Mexican flag was raised amidst salvos of artillery and fusillade. After this, the soldiers received nothing.

The next day, the soldiers were order to cut off their braids. This produced a very unfavorable reaction in everyone – men and women alike. The men were used to wearing their hair long and braided. At the tip of the braid would be a ribbon or silk knot. On many men, the braid went past their waist. It was quite similar to the way the Chinese wore their hair. The only difference was that they did not shave any part of their hair like the Chinese did.

The order was carried out I remember when my father arrived home with his braid in his hand. He gave it to my

mother. My mother's face was not any better. She would look at the braid and cry.

#### Part Two: The U.S.-Mexico War

The Americans took over this country in 1846 while (Pío) Pico was governor.

(U.S. Army General John) Frémont was here with his people for two or three days and then went to Los Angeles. In that same year, 1846, things happened in Los Angeles. Commodore Stockton arrived from San Pedro with his forces and took the plaza with no opposition. He remained there for a few days and left behind a garrison under the command of Gillespie, much like the garrison that was left in Santa Bárbara and the one that was here in San Diego. The Californios forced Gillespie to abandon Los Angeles and retreat to San Pedro, where he boarded ship.

Captain Mervin attempted to march from Los Angeles from San Pedro with some seamen and sailors, but Don José Antonio Carrillo and his troops forced him to return his ship with some casualties.

Gillespie came to San Diego, and from here, Commodore Stockton dispatched him with thirty-five or forty men to go and meet up with General Kearny. They received word that Kearny was with a small force at San Felipe, near Agua Caliente. This information came to them from a man who had obtained it from the Indians. Gillespie reunited with Kearny at Santa María and from there they went down to San Pascual. There they met up with a small force of Californio soldier led by Don Andrés Pico. Kearny was beaten. He and Gillespie were injured. Two captains and many soldiers were killed. Since many others were injured, they had to retreat to the Cerro de las Piedras on this side of San Pascual. There, the Californios tried to surround him. Kearny and his men continued fighting, while retreating, until they arrived at Los Peñasquitos. His troops were not bothered by the enemy there. It is said that during those days of combat, Kearny and his people had to eat mule meat. This is quite possible, for the Californio cavalry cut off their supplies. Nevertheless, they managed to communicate with the port of San Diego and they were sent reinforcements. They retreated to San Diego with the reinforcements without difficulty.

A few days before the Battle at San Pascual, eleven Californios were murdered by Indians at the Arroyo de los Álamos. They retreated to that spot with their few belongings so as to not take part in the war between the Americans and the Californios. I believe this happened in November. The names of the Californios who perished in that massacre were Francisco Basualdo, Ramón Aguilar, Santos Alipás, Domínguez, Santiago Osuna, José María Alvarado, José López, Manuel Serrano, Eustaquio Ruiz, Juan de la Cruz, and one more whose name I cannot remember.

At the end of December, Commodore Stockton and General Jearny left San Diego and headed to Los Ángeles with about six hundred men. At the Paso de Bárola and at La Mesa (January 8 and 9, 1847) they engaged in battles with the Californios and the Americans were triumphant. On January 10 they entered Los Ángeles without further resistance, and a few days later, Don Andrés Pico surrendered to Colonel Frémont at San Fernando. Since then, this country has been under the flag of the United States.

[“Times Gone By in Alta California: Recollections of Senora Dona Juana Machado Alipaz de Ridington,” Bancroft Library, 1878 Author\(s\): Raymond S.Brandes and Thomas Savage Source: The Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly, Vol. 41, No. 3 \(September, 1959\), pp. 195-240. Published by: University of California Press on behalf of the Historical Society of Southern California.](#)

[13]

## José María Sánchez's Account of the Texas Frontier

**José María Sánchez, a Mexican military officer under Manuel Mier y Terán's command, wrote his views of frontier society during his travels to the region in 1828.**

Laredo, February 2. 1828-At two o'clock we continued our way through a country which was as arid as during the previous days. At daybreak we saw various herds of deer and a great number of wild horses and mares, mesteñas [mustangs], that live in these deserted regions and pasture peacefully on the immense plains. In spite of our care the water gave out because of the excessive heat and we suffered considerably from thirst. This became unbearable by twelve o'clock, and we were unable to rest as there was not a single tree under which we might stop. A plain that seemed to be on fire stretched before our eyes and our despair increased, until, at about one o'clock, we discerned in the distance the peaceful waters of the Rio Bravo del Norte [Rio Grande], whose treeless banks displayed the water lying like a silver thread upon the immense plain. The desire to reach the water made our last lap all the more arduous, and when at last the beasts, fatigued by their thirst, were scarcely able to take another step, we arrived at the coveted stream. On the banks of the river we met General Bustamante, who, with his officers, had come out to meet us. He offered me a drink of aguardiente

[firewater], which I took with plenty of water, and I recovered my failing strength. It was decided to cross the river. This was accomplished with little difficulty, and at last we entered the Presidio de Laredo, situated on the opposite bank.

This village, which is one of the oldest upon the banks of the Rio Bravo, has suffered a great deal from attacks of wild Indians, principally the Lipanes, who used to lay siege to it in time of war, but now frequent it peacefully. Its population numbers about 2000 persons, all care-free people who are fond of dancing, and little inclined to work. The women, who are, as a general rule, good-looking, are ardently fond of luxury and leisure; they have rather loose ideas of morality, which cause the greater part of them to have shameful relations openly, especially with the officers, both because they are more numerous and spend their salary freely, and because they are more skillful in the art of seduction.

The garrison of the presidio consists of a company of more than one hundred men, but, in spite of this fact, the place has not prospered, nor do its inhabitants try to increase its prosperity. The streets are straight and long; all the buildings are covered with grass; and the houses have no conveniences. A desolate air envelops the entire city, and there is not a single tree to gladden the eye as the vegetation of this arid land consists of small mesquites and huisache with cactus scattered here and there. Food is extremely scarce; the little corn which is cultivated by the inhabitants is planted near the city in tracts which are over- flooded by the river in time of high water because the scarcity of rain does not permit planting it in other places. Each farmer gathers his crop, which often does not suffice his own family for half of the time between crops. Therefore the few who have beasts of burden and wish to make some profit undertake a trip to Candela or some other point and bring back corn, flour, brown sugar, and cane alcohol [vino mezcal], all of which they sell at very high prices. Often these goods cannot be secured at any price. Beef, which is the only kind of meat I have seen here, is secured with great difficulty, because the animals must be brought from long distances, often at the risk of life from attack by wild Indians. Having to undertake the trip to San Antonio [de] Bejar through

uninhabited country, I had to order for our entire company what they call *bastimento* [provisions] in this part of the country. This consists of a sort of corn cakes resembling corn bread; toasted and ground corn with brown sugar, anise seed, or cinnamon, called *pinole*, which is used to make mush or may be taken with water during the hot part of the day; and dry beef, salted to keep it from spoiling.

Bejar (San Antonio), March 1st. The character of the people is carefree, they are enthusiastic dancers, very fond of luxury, and the worst punishment that can be inflicted upon them is work. Doubtless, there are some individuals, out of the 1,425 that make up the total population, who are free from these failings, but they are very few. The temples and old mission buildings that constituted the missions of Concepción, San José, San Juan, and La Espada, are within a few leagues of the city. These, with the exception of that of San José, founded in 1720 by Fray Antonio Margil, were first established on the frontier of Texas and were moved to the San Antonio River in 1730, when San Fernando de Bejar was founded. The missionaries undertook the reduction of the gentiles with their accustomed zeal, but in our day the glamor of learning has come upon us so suddenly that it has blinded some of the very few persons of judgment [in Bejar], property owners in the main, who clamored loudly: "Out with the friars, out with the good-for-nothings." Thus they abolished the missions and divided among themselves the lands they have not known how to cultivate and which they have left in a sad state of neglect.

The Americans from the north have taken possession of practically all the eastern part of Texas, in most cases without the permission of the authorities. They immigrate constantly, finding no one to prevent them, and take possession of the *sitio* [location] that best suits them without either asking leave or going through any formality other than that of building their homes. Thus the majority of inhabitants in the Department [of Texas] are North Americans, the Mexican population being reduced to only Bejar, Nacogdoches, and La Bahia del Espiritu Santo, wretched settlements that between them do not number three thousand inhabitants, and the new village of Guadalupe Victoria that has scarcely more than seventy settlers. The

government of the state, with its seat at Saltillo, that should watch over the preservation of its most precious and interesting department, taking measures to prevent its being stolen by foreign hands, is the one that knows the least not only about actual conditions, but even about its territory.

Villa de Austin [San Felipe de Austin], April 27.-We continued along hills without trees, the ground being wet and muddy, until we arrived at a distance of four or five leagues from the settlement of San Felipe de Austin, where we were met by Samuel Williams, secretary of the empresario, Mr. Stephen Austin; and we were given lodging in a house that had been prepared for the purpose. This village has been settled by Mr. Stephen Austin, a native of the United States of the North. It consists, at present, of forty or fifty wooden houses on the western bank of the large river known as Rio de los Brazos de Dios, but the houses are not arranged systematically so as to form streets; but on the contrary, lie in an irregular and desultory manner. Its population is nearly two hundred persons, of which only ten are Mexicans, for the balance are all Americans from the North with an occasional European. Two wretched little stores supply the inhabitants of the colony: one sells only whiskey, rum, sugar, and coffee; the other, rice, flour, lard, and cheap cloth. It may seem that these items are too few for the needs of the inhabitants, but they are not because the Americans from the North, at least the greater part of those I have seen, eat only salted meat, bread made by themselves out of corn meal, coffee, and home-made cheese. To these the greater part of those who live in the village add strong liquor, for they are in general, in my opinion, lazy people of vicious character. Some of them cultivate their small farms by planting corn; but this task they usually entrust to their negro slaves, whom they treat with considerable harshness.

Beyond the village in an immense stretch of land formed by rolling hills are scattered the families brought by Stephen Austin, which today number more than two thousand persons. The diplomatic policy of this empresario, evident in all his actions, has, as one may say, lulled the authorities into a sense of security, while he works diligently for his own ends. In my judgment, the spark that will start the conflagration that will



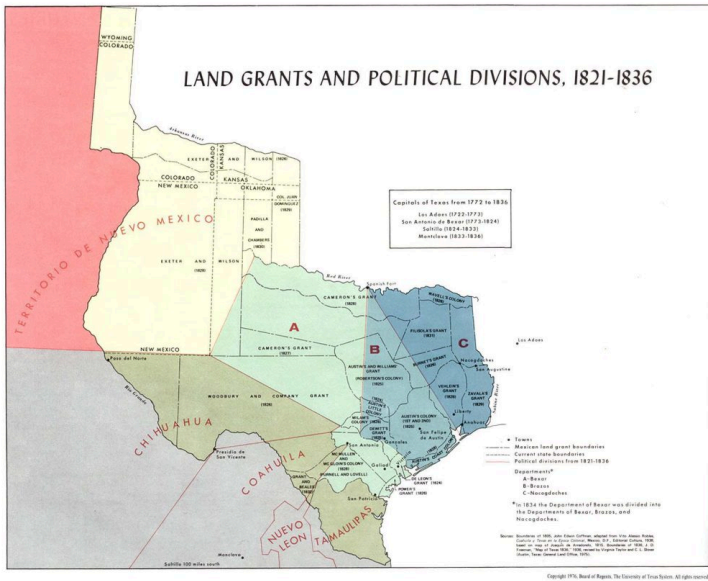
deprive us of Texas, will start from this colony. All because the government does not take vigorous measures to prevent it. Perhaps it does not realize the value of what it is about to lose.

June 2.-After the rays of the sun had found their way through the thick woods of Texas, we started again, and after crossing the Neches, whose flood waters were beginning to subside, we traveled over wooded and rolling country, troubled by the mosquitoes and a burning thirst occasioned by the excessive heat. We came across a poor house occupied by two children, ten or eleven years old, pale and dirty, signs that plainly indicated the poverty of this family of solitary Americans. We heard that the mother was in Nacogdoches. How strange are these people from the North! We halted at about three in the afternoon on the western bank of the Angelina River at the house of a poor American who treated us with considerable courtesy, a very rare thing among individuals of his nationality.

Nacogdoches; Trinidad. June 3. The population [of Nacogdoches] does not exceed seven hundred persons, including the troops of the garrison, and all live in very good houses made of lumber, well-built and forming straight streets, which make the place more agreeable. The women do not number one hundred. The civil administration is entrusted to an Alcalde, and in his absence, to the first and second regidores, but up until now, they have been, unfortunately, extremely ignorant men more worthy of pity than of reproof. From this fact, the North American inhabitants (who are in the majority) have formed an ill opinion of the Mexicans, judging them, in their pride, incapable of understanding laws, arts, etc. They continually try to entangle the authorities in order to carry out the policy most suitable to their perverse designs.

The Mexicans that live here are very humble people, and perhaps their intentions are good, but because of their education and environment they are ignorant not only of the customs of our great cities, but even of the occurrences of our Revolution, excepting a few persons who have heard about them. Accustomed to the continued trade with the North Americans, they have adopted their customs and habits, and one may say truly that they are not Mexicans except by birth, for they even speak Spanish with marked incorrectness.

Source: José María Sánchez, "A Trip to Texas in 1828," trans. Carlos E. Castañeda, Southwestern Historical Quarterly, 29 (1926), 260-61, 271.



From Atlas of Texas. Published by The University of Texas at Austin, Bureau of Business Research, 1976.

[14]

## Texas Treaty with the Cherokee

**In 1836, Sam Houston, who formerly lived among the Cherokee people, negotiated an agreement with Cherokees and other groups who escaped the Indian Removal Act in the United States. This agreement was short-lived in most cases, as later Texas and U.S. governments broadly extended “Indian Removal Policies” to Texas.**

This Treaty made and established between Sam Houston, and John Forbes, Commissioners, on the part of the Provisional Government of Texas, of the one part, and the Cherokees, and their associate Bands now residing in Texas of the other part-to wit Shawanee, Delawares, Kickapoos, Quapaws, Choctaws, Boluxies, Pawanies, Alabamas, Cochatties, Caddos of the Naches, Tahocattakes, and Unataquous, – By the Head Chiefs, Headmen and Warriors, of the Cherokees, as Elder Brother and Representative of all the other Bands, agreeably to their last General Council.

This Treaty is made conformably to a declaration made by the last General Consultation, at St. Felipe, and dated 13th November AD 1835.

Article First. The Parties declare, that there shall be a firm and

lasting peace forever, and that a friendly intercourse Shall shall be preserved, by the people belonging to both parties.

Article Second. It is agreed and declared that the before named Tribes, or Bands shall form one community, and that they shall have and possess the lands, within the following bounds. To wit, – laying West of the San Antonio road, and beginning on the West, at the point where the said road crosses the River Angeline, and running up said river, until it reaches the mouth of the first large creek, (below the great Shawanee Village) emptying into the said River from the north east, thence running with said creek, to its main source, and from thence, a due north line to the Sabine River, and with said river west\_ then starting where the San. Antonio road crosses the Angeline river, and with the said road to the point where it crosses the Naches river

And and thence running up the east side of said river, in a North West direction.

Article, Third. All lands granted or settled in good faith previous to the settlement of the Cherokees, within the before described bounds are not conveyed by this treaty, but excepted from its operation – all persons who have once been removed and returned shall be considered as intruders and their settlements, not be respected.

Article, Fourth. It is agreed by the parties aforesaid that the several Bands or Tribes named in this Treaty, shall all remove within the limits, or bounds as before described.

Article Fifth. It is agreed and declared, by the parties aforesaid, that the land, lying and being within the aforesaid limits shall never be sold or alienated to any person or persons, power or Government, whatsoever else than the Government of Texas, and the Commissioners on behalf of the Government of Texas bind themselves, to prevent in future all persons from intruding within the said bounds. And it is agreed upon the part of the Cherokees, for themselves and their younger Brothers, that no other tribes or Bands of Indians, whatsoever shall settle within

the limits aforesaid, but those already named in this Treaty, and now residing in Texas.

Article, Sixth. It is declared that no individual person, member of the Tribes before named, shall have power to sell, or lease land to any, person or persons, not a member or members of this community of Indians, nor shall any citizen of Texas, be allowed to lease or buy land from any Indian or Indians.

Article Seventh. That the Indians shall be governed by their own Regulations, and Laws, within their own territory, not contrary to the Laws of the Government of Texas. all property stolen from the citizens of Texas, or from the Indians shall be restored to the party from whom it was stolen, and the offender or offenders shall be punished by the party to whom he or they may belong.

Article, Eighth. The Government of Texas shall have power to regulate Trade, and intercourse, but no Tax shall be laid on the Trade of the Indians.

Article, Ninth. The Parties to this Treaty agree that one or more agencies, shall be created and at least one agent shall reside, especially, within the Cherokee Villages, whose duty it shall be to see, that no injustice is done to them, or other members of the community of Indians...

The Texas-Cherokee Treaty of 1836, <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/exhibits/texas175/chokeoke.html>



[15]

## Barbara Aguirre's Petition for a "Divorce"

**The following archival document was a woman's request for a "divorce" in the town of Paso del Norte, now Ciudad Juárez and El Paso. In this context, a divorce is a recognized separation, as Catholic doctrine does not permit the dissolution of marriages. This letter reveals several attitudes about women's rights and marriage in the larger northern Mexican frontier after independence.**

I, María Bárbara Aguirre, wife of the citizen Francisco Velarde, before you, with all due respect and under the useful and necessary pretenses, states the following. For more or less six months, I have lived apart from my husband for he has afflicted me with serious injuries, beaten me, and has confined me in the mill of his father, Don José María Velarde, twenty-four hours a day. For these undeserved treatments, already made insufferable for their frequency, I left my home and lodged at the home of an uncle of mine. I am in urgent need of a separation by means of a divorce, for it is the only way I can be guaranteed of an appreciable degree of protection from my husband's unwarranted anger towards me.

The gentleman, my husband, says that for eight years he lived in peace and quiet, honorably complying with the duties of being my spouse and that at the end of that time; I was seduced,

which he attributes to my lover – entirely false charges. From the moment that I made my wedding vows my suffering began, not only through insults and vile language, but through having to work as a slave, not only because my husband said this was to be, but also because he received counsel from his parents to do this: this is the principal origin of our enmity.

He (Francisco Velarde) added the abominable vice of drunkenness to his perversity. This changed him for the worse, as he became carried away with anger, I became a touchstone for him to insult, and lacking the shelter of my beloved mother – seeing myself as being absolutely humiliated and unprotected – I made this plea for judicial protection in order to provide remedy for my scandalous life; as I have stated earlier, I and others will provide the necessary evidence for this to take place.

On the last occasion that my husband subjected me to his torture, he infamously brought me to the mountain where my father-in-law has a property known as the mill (el Molino). He confined me and hung me from the rafters, and gave me lashes, leaving me in that state until later that day, when he returned to do the same to me. The following day he untied me as I was almost dead, and he left me there penned up; and later that day he returned, he pulled me by my hair and dragged me outside, telling me I can go in any direction I want to go. I stayed on the mountain, and when night fell, I came to the home of my Aunt Anita; the good lady brought me to my home, that of my husband, which was closed with a lock. I spent eight days in the homes of neighbors to wait for him to open the door to me, and when I realized that it wouldn't happen, I went to the home of my uncle Don Luis Ortega, who passed on a warning to my husband and also informed the ecclesiastic judge and priest about the treatment that my indolent husband terms the family punishment that he claims to be able to impose upon me.

It is no less than proof of his love for me that in the more than six months that he has been separated from me, he has not made an effort to know how I am doing or even given me a greeting. He has taken away even my clothing, something that not even a servant girl would endure. He has handed my legitimate property to another woman, with no shame, and is planning to travel to New Mexico this month, in order to



settle. It is certainly praiseworthy that after all the suffering I have endured from my husband that the gentleman accuses me of being an adulterer, even though the most ignorant person would be able to sense that I am acting in good faith, for I am subjecting myself to the judgment of the authorities, and in filing this suit on my behalf, I realize my honor will be tested.

“Bárbara Aguirre’s Testimony” Jamie M. Starling “From the Moment I Made My Wedding Vows My Suffering Began: Calidad in the Nineteenth-century Mexican Borderlands,” The Latin Americanist (University of North Carolina, September, 2018).

[16]

## Constitution of the Republic Texas, 1836

**The Constitution of the Republic of Texas was primarily drafted by recent settlers from the United States, who brought the ideals of “Jeffersonian” and “Jacksonian” Democracy to the convention. Three of its 57 delegates were of Mexican birth and descent.**

### **DECLARATION OF RIGHTS.**

This Declaration of Rights is declared to be a part of this Constitution, and shall never be violated on any pretence whatever. And in order to guard against the transgression of the high powers which we have delegated, we declare that every thing in this bill of rights contained, and every other right not hereby delegated, is reserved to the People.

First. All men, when they form a social compact, have equal rights, and no man or set of men are entitled to exclusive public privileges or emoluments from the community.

Second. All political power is inherent in the People, and all free governments are founded on their authority, and instituted for their benefit; and they have at all times an inalienable right to alter their government in such manner as they may think proper.

Third. No preference shall be given by law to any religious

denomination or mode of worship over another, but every person shall be permitted to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience.

Fourth. Every citizen shall be at liberty to speak, write, or publish his opinions on any subject, being responsible for the abuse of that privilege. No law shall ever be passed to curtail the liberty of speech or of the press; and in all prosecutions for libels, the truth may be given in evidence, and the jury shall have the right to determine the law and fact, under the direction of the court.

Fifth. The People shall be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and possessions, from all unreasonable searches or seizures, and no warrant shall issue to search any place or seize any person or thing, without describing the place to be searched or the person or thing to be seized, without probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation.

Sixth. In all criminal prosecutions the accused shall have the right of being heard, by himself, or council, or both; he shall have the right to demand the nature and cause of the accusation, shall be confronted with the witnesses against him, and have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor. And in all prosecutions by presentment or indictment, he shall have the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury; he shall not be compelled to give evidence against himself, or be deprived of life, liberty, property, but by due course of law. And no freeman shall be holden to answer for any criminal charge, but on presentment or indictment by a grand jury, except in the land of naval forces, or in the militia when in actual service in time of war or public danger, or in cases of impeachment.

Seventh. No citizen shall be deprived of privileges, outlawed, exiled, or in any manner disfranchised, except by due course of the law of the land.

Eighth. No title of nobility, hereditary privileges or honors, shall ever be granted or conferred in this Republic. No person holding any office of profit or trust shall, without the consent of Congress, receive from any foreign state any present, office, or emolument, of any kind.

Ninth. No person, for the same offence, shall be twice put in

jeopardy of life or limbs. And the right of trial by jury shall remain inviolate.

Tenth. All persons shall be bailable by sufficient security unless for capital crimes, when the proof is evident or presumption strong; and the privilege of the writ of “habeas corpus” shall not be suspended, except in case of rebellion or invasion the public safety may require it.

Eleventh. Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, or cruel or unusual punishments inflicted. All courts shall be open, and every man for any injury done him in his lands, goods, person, or reputation, shall have remedy by due course of law.

Twelfth. No person shall be imprisoned for debt in consequence of inability to pay.

Thirteenth. No person’s particular services shall be demanded, nor property taken or applied to public use, unless by the consent of himself or his representative, without just compensation being made therefor according to law.

Fourteenth. Every citizen shall have the right to bear arms in defence of himself and the Republic. The military shall at all times and in all cases be subordinate to the civil power.

Fifteenth. The sure and certain defence of a free people is a well-regulated militia; and it shall be the duty of the Legislature to enact such laws as may be necessary to the organizing of the militia of this Republic.

Sixteenth. Treason against this Republic shall consist only in levying war against it, or adhering to its enemies, giving them aid and support. No retrospective or ex post facto law, or laws impairing the obligations of contracts shall be made.

Seventeenth. Perpetuities or monopolies are contrary to the genius of a free government, and shall not be allowed; nor shall the law of primogeniture or entailments ever be in force in this Republic.

## **GENERAL PROVISIONS.**

**SEC. 1.** Laws shall be made to exclude from office, from the right of suffrage, and from serving on juries, those who shall hereafter be convicted of bribery, perjury, or other high crimes and misdemeanors.

**SEC. 2.** Returns of all elections for officers who are to be commissioned by the President, shall be made to the Secretary of State of this Republic.

**SEC. 3.** The President and heads of Departments shall keep their offices at the seat of Government, unless removed by the permission of Congress, or unless, in cases of emergency in time of war, the public interest may require their removal.

**SEC. 4.** The President shall make use of his private seal until a seal of the Republic shall be provided.

**SEC. 5.** It shall be the duty of Congress, as soon as circumstances will permit, to provide, by law, a general system of education.

**SEC. 6.** All free white persons who shall emigrate to this Republic, and who shall, after a residence of six months, make oath before some competent authority that he intends to reside permanently in the same, and shall swear to support this Constitution, and that he will bear true allegiance to the Republic of Texas, shall be entitled to all the privileges of citizenship.

**SEC. 7.** So soon as convenience will permit, there shall be a penal code formed on principles of reformation, and not of vindictive justice; and the civil and criminal laws shall be revised, digested, and arranged under different heads; and all laws relating to land titles shall be translated, revised, and promulgated.

**SEC. 8.** All persons who shall leave the country for the purpose of evading a participation in the present struggle, or shall refuse to participate in it, or shall give aid or assistance to the present enemy, shall forfeit all rights of citizenship and such lands as they may hold in the Republic.

**SEC. 9.** All persons of color who were slaves for life previous to their emigration to Texas, and who are now held in bondage, shall remain in the like state of servitude, provide the said slave shall be the bona fide property of the person so holding said slave as aforesaid. Congress shall pass no laws to prohibit emigrants from the United States of America from bringing their slaves into the Republic with them, and holding them by the same tenure by which such slaves were held in the United States; nor shall Congress have power to emancipate slaves; nor

shall any slave-holder be allowed to emancipate his or her slave or slaves, without the consent of Congress, unless he or she shall send his or her slave or slaves without the limits of the Republic. No free person of African descent, either in whole or in part, shall be permitted to reside permanently in the Republic, without the consent of Congress, and the importation or admission of Africans or negroes into this Republic, excepting from the United States of America, is forever prohibited, and declared to be piracy.

**SEC. 10.** All persons, (Africans, the descendants of Africans, and Indians excepted,) who were residing in Texas on the day of the Declaration of Independence, shall be considered citizens of the Republic, and entitled to all the privileges of such. All citizens now living in Texas, who have not received their portion of land, in like manner as colonists, shall be entitled to their land in the following proportion and manner: Every head of a family shall be entitled to one league and labor of land, and every single man of the age of seventeen and upwards, shall be entitled to the third part of one league of land. ...

“Constitution of Republic of Texas.” *Laws of the Republic of Texas, in Two Volumes*. Houston: Printed at the Office of the Telegraph, 1838, vol. 1, pp. 9-25. Streeter 275.

See <https://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/constitutions/introduction> for complete texts of all Texas Constitutions.

circumstances will permit, to provide by law, a general system of education.

Sec. 6. All free white persons who shall emigrate to this republic, and who shall, after a residence of six months, make oath before some competent authority that he intends to reside permanently in the same, and shall swear to support this constitution, and that he will bear true allegiance to the republic of Texas, shall be entitled to all the privileges of citizenship.

Sec. 7. So soon as convenience will permit, there shall be a penal code formed on principles of reformation, and not of vindictive justice; and the civil and criminal laws shall be revised, digested, and arranged under different heads; and all laws relating to land titles shall be translated, revised and promulgated.

Sec. 8. All persons who shall leave the country for the purpose of evading a participation in the present struggle, or shall refuse to participate in it, or shall give aid or assistance to the present enemy, shall forfeit all rights of citizenship, and such lands as they may hold in the republic.

Sec. 9. All persons of color who were slaves for life previous to their emigration to Texas, and who are now held in bondage, shall remain in the like state of servitude: *provided*, the said slave shall be the bona fide property of the person so holding said slave as aforesaid. Congress shall pass no laws to prohibit emigrants from bringing their slaves into the republic with them, and holding them by the same tenure by which such slaves were held in the United States; nor shall congress have power to emancipate slaves; nor shall any slave holder be allowed to emancipate his or her slave or slaves without the consent of congress, unless he or she shall send his or her slave or slaves without the limits of the republic. No free person of African descent, either in whole or in part, shall be permitted to reside permanently in the republic, without the consent of congress; and the importation or admission of Africans or negroes into this republic, excepting from the United States of America, is forever prohibited, and declared to be piracy.

Sec. 10. All persons (Africans, the descendants of Africans, and Indians excepted,) who were residing in Texas on the day of the declaration of independence, shall be considered citizens of the republic, and entitled to all the privileges of such. All citizens now living in Texas, who have not received their portion of land, in like manner as colonists, shall be entitled to their land in the following proportion and manner: Every head of a family shall be entitled to one league and labor of land; and

[17]

## John L. O'Sullivan, "Annexation," 1845

**John L. O'Sullivan was a journalist and commentator who became noted for his strident support for expansionism during the 1830s and 1840s. This essay popularized the phrase "Manifest Destiny," which remains a common term that encapsulates the politics of the westward movement during the era.**

John L. O'Sullivan, "Annexation," 1845

It is now time for the opposition to the Annexation of Texas to cease, all further agitation of the waters of bitterness and strife, at least in connexion with this question, –even though it may perhaps be required of us as a necessary condition of the freedom of our institutions, that we must live on for ever in a state of unpausing struggle and excitement upon some subject of party division or other. But, in regard to Texas, enough has now been given to party. It is time for the common duty of Patriotism to the Country to succeed;–or if this claim will not be recognized, it is at least time for common sense to acquiesce with decent grace in the inevitable and the irrevocable.

Texas is now ours. Already, before these words are written, her Convention has undoubtedly ratified the acceptance, by her Congress, of our proffered invitation into the Union; and made the requisite changes in her already republican form of



constitution to adapt it to its future federal relations. Her star and her stripe may already be said to have taken their place in the glorious blazon of our common nationality; and the sweep of our eagle's wing already includes within its circuit the wide extent of her fair and fertile land. She is no longer to us a mere geographical space—a certain combination of coast, plain, mountain, valley, forest and stream. She is no longer to us a mere country on the map. She comes within the dear and sacred designation of Our Country; no longer a "*pays*," she is a part of "*la patrie*;" and that which is at once a sentiment and a virtue, Patriotism, already begins to thrill for her too within the national heart. It is time then that all should cease to treat her as alien, and even adverse—cease to denounce and vilify all and everything connected with her accession—cease to thwart and oppose the remaining steps for its consummation; or where such efforts are felt to be unavailing, at least to embitter the hour of reception by all the most ungracious frowns of aversion and words of unwelcome. There has been enough of all this. It has had its fitting day during the period when, in common with every other possible question of practical policy that can arise, it unfortunately became one of the leading topics of party division, of presidential electioneering. But that period has passed, and with it let its prejudices and its passions, its discords and its denunciations, pass away too. The next session of Congress will see the representatives of the new young State in their places in both our halls of national legislation, side by side with those of the old Thirteen. Let their reception into "the family" be frank, kindly, and cheerful, as befits such an occasion, as comports not less with our own self-respect than patriotic duty towards them. Ill betide those foul birds that delight to file their own nest, and disgust the ear with perpetual discord of ill-omened croak...

California probably, next fall away from the loose adhesion which, in such a country as Mexico, holds a remote province in a slight equivocal kind of dependence on the metropolis. Imbecile and distracted, Mexico never can exert any real governmental authority over such a country. The impotence of the one and the distance of the other, must make the relation one of virtual independence; unless, by stunting the province of all natural

growth, and forbidding that immigration which can alone develop its capabilities and fulfil the purposes of its creation, tyranny may retain a military dominion, which is no government in the, legitimate sense of the term. In the case of California this is now impossible. The Anglo-Saxon foot is already on its borders. Already the advance guard of the irresistible army of Anglo-Saxon emigration has begun to pour down upon it, armed with the plough and the rifle, and marking its trail with schools and colleges, courts and representative halls, mills and meeting-houses. A population will soon be in actual occupation of California, over which it will be idle for Mexico to dream of dominion. They will necessarily become independent. All this without agency of our government, without responsibility of our people—in the natural flow of events, the spontaneous working of principles, and the adaptation of the tendencies and wants of the human race to the elemental circumstances in the midst of which they find themselves placed. And they will have a right to independence—to self-government—to the possession of the homes conquered from the wilderness by their own labors and dangers, sufferings and sacrifices—a better and a truer right than the artificial tide of sovereignty in Mexico, a thousand miles distant, inheriting from Spain a title good only against those who have none better. Their right to independence will be the natural right of self-government belonging to any community strong enough to maintain it—distinct in position, origin and character, and free from any mutual obligations of membership of a common political body, binding it to others by the duty of loyalty and compact of public faith...

Away, then, with all idle French talk of *balances of power* on the American Continent. There is no growth in Spanish America! Whatever progress of population there may be in the British Canadas, is only for their own early severance of their present colonial relation to the little island three thousand miles across the Atlantic; soon to be followed by Annexation, and destined to swell the still accumulating momentum of our progress. And whosoever may hold the balance, though they should cast into the opposite scale all the bayonets and cannon, not only of France and England, but of Europe entire, how would it kick the

beam against the simple, solid weight of the two hundred and fifty, or three hundred millions—and American millions—destined to gather beneath the flutter of the stripes and stars, in the fast hastening year of the Lord 1945!

United States Magazine and Democratic Review 17, no. 85 (July/August 1845): 5–10, available at <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.32044010500700&view=1up&seq=11>.

**The United States in 1850, showing new western states and territories. J. Distrunell, 1850.**



[18]

## General Francisco Mejia's Proclamation

**As U.S. Army troops annexed Texas and began to march to the Rio Grande in 1846, Mexican general Francisco Mejia issued a declaration to the residents of Matamoros.**

FELLOW-CITIZENS: – The annexation of the department of Texas to the United States, projected and consummated by the tortuous policy of the cabinet of the United States does not yet satisfy the ambitious desires of the degenerate sons of Washington. The civilized world has already recognized in that act all the marks of injustice, iniquity, and the most scandalous violation of the rights of nations. Indelible is the stain which will forever darken the character for virtue falsely attributed to the people of the United States; and posterity will regard with horror their perfidious conduct, and the immorality of the means employed by them to carry into effect that most degrading depredation. The right of conquest has always been a crime against humanity; but nations jealous of their dignity and reputation have endeavored at least to cover it by the splendor of arms and the prestige of victory. To the United States, it has been reserved to put in practice dissimulation, fraud, and the basest treachery, in order to obtain possession, in the midst of peace, of the territory of a friendly nation, which generously relied upon the faith of promises and the solemnity of treaties.

The cabinet of the United States does not, however, stop in its career of usurpation. Not only does it aspire to the possession of the department of Texas, but it covets also the regions on the left bank of the Rio Bravo. Its army, hitherto for some time stationed at Corpus Christi, is now advancing to take possession of a large part of Tamaulipas; and its vanguard has arrived at the Arroyo Colorado, distant eighteen leagues from this place. What expectations, therefore, can the Mexican government have of treating with an enemy, who, whilst endeavoring to lull us into security, by opening diplomatic negotiations, proceeds to occupy a territory which never could have been the object of the pending discussion? The limits of Texas are certain and recognized; never have they extended beyond the river Nueces; notwithstanding which, the American army has crossed the line separating Tamaulipas from that department. Even though Mexico could forget that the United States urged and aided the rebellion of the former colonists, and that the principle, giving to an independent people the right to annex itself to another nation, is not applicable to the case, in which the latter has been the protector of the independence of the former, with the object of admitting it into its own bosom; even thought it could be accepted as an axiom of international law, that the violation of every rule of morality and justice might serve as a legitimate title for acquisition; nevertheless, the territory of Tamaulipas would still remain beyond the law of annexation, sanctioned by the American Congress; because that law comprises independent Texas, the ground occupied by the rebellious colony, and in no wise includes other departments, in which the Mexican government has uninterruptedly exercised its legitimate authority.

Fellow-countrymen: With an enemy which respects not its own laws, which shamelessly derides the very principles invoked by it previously, in order to excuse its ambitious views, we have no other resource than arms. We are fortunately always prepared to take them up with glory, in defense of our country; little do we regard the blood in our veins, when we are called on to shed it in vindication of our honor, to assure our nationality and independence. If to the torrent of devastation which threatens us it be necessary to oppose a dike of steel, our swords

will form it; and on their sharp points will the enemy receive the fruits of his anticipated conquest. If the banks of the Panuco have been immortalized by the defeat of an enemy, respectable and worthy of the valour of Mexico, those of the Bravo shall witness the ignominy of the proud sons of the north, and its deep waters shall serve as the sepulchre for those who dare to approach it. The flames of patriotism which burns in our hearts will receive new fuel from the odious presence of the conquerors; and the cry of Dolores and Iguala shall be re-echoed with harmony to our ears, when we take up our march to oppose our naked breasts to the rifles of the hunters of the Mississippi.

FRANCISCO MEJIA.

Matamoros, March 18, 1846.

National Defense University, Case Study, The U.S.-Mexico War National Defense University, Norfolk Virginia, 2006.  
<https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a480587.pdf>

[19]

## A U.S. Prisoner of War in Matamoros

**In the “Thornton Affair,” the Mexican Army fought with a scouting party of U.S. Army dragoons near what is now Las Rucias, Texas. W. J. Hardee, one of the prisoners of war in Matamoros (“Matamoras”), sent this message.**

Sir: – It becomes my painful duty to inform you of the circumstances which led our being brought to this place as prisoners of war. Captain Thornton’s command, consisting of fifty-two dragoons, left camp (the Fort Brown site), as you know, at night on the 24th instant (April); it marched 15 miles and halted until daylight, when the march was again resumed. Captain Thornton’s orders, as I understood them, were to ascertain if the enemy had crossed the river above our camp, and to reconnoitre his position and force. All his inquiries on the way tended to the conviction that the enemy had crossed in strength. About 23 miles from our camp our guide became so satisfied of this fact that he refused to go any further, and no entreaties on the part of Captain Thornton could shake his resolution. About three miles from this latter place we came to a large plantation bordering the river, and enclosed with a high chaparral fence, with some houses at its upper extremity. To these houses Captain Thornton endeavored, by entering the lower extremity, to approach; but failing to do so, he was

compelled to pass round the fence, and entered the field by a pair of bars, the house being situated about 200 yards from the entrance. Into this plantation the whole command entered in single file, without any guard being placed in front, without any sentinel at the bars, or any other precaution being taken to prevent surprise. Captain Thornton was prepossessed with the idea that the Mexicans had not crossed; and if they had, that they would not fight. I had been placed in rear, and was therefore the last to enter. When I came up to the house I found the men scattered in every direction, hunting for some one with whom to communicate. At last an old man was found; and while Captain Thornton was talking with him, the cry of alarm was given, and the enemy were seen in numbers at the bars.

Our gallant commander, immediately gave the command to charge, and himself led the advance; but it was too late; the enemy had secured the entrance, and it was impossible to force it. The officers and men did everything that fearless intrepidity could accomplish; but the infantry had stationed themselves in the field on the right of the passage way, and the cavalry lined the exterior fence, and our retreat was hopelessly cut off. Seeing this, Captain Thornton turned to the right and skirted the interior of the fence, the command following him. During this time the enemy were shooting at us in every direction; and when the retreat commenced, our men were in a perfect state of disorder. I rode up to Captain Thornton and told him that our only hope of safety was in tearing down the fence: he gave the order, but could not stop his horse, nor would the men stop. It was useless, for by this time the enemy had gained our rear in great numbers. Foreseeing that the direction which Captain Thornton was pursuing would lead to the certain destruction of himself and men, without the possibility of resistance, I turned to the right and told the men to follow me.

I made for the river, intending either to swim it or place myself in a position for defence. I found the bank too boggy to accomplish the former, and I therefore rallied the men, forming them in order of battle in the open field, and without the range of the infantry behind the fence. I counted twenty-five men and examined their arms, but almost every one had lost a sabre, a pistol, or carbine; nevertheless, the men were firm and disposed,



if necessary, to fight to the last extremity. In five minutes from the time the first shot was fired, the field was surrounded by a numerous body of men. However, I determined to sell our lives as dearly as possible if I could not secure good treatment, and accordingly I went forward and arranged with an officer that I should deliver myself and men as prisoners of war, to be treated with all the consideration to which such unfortunates are entitled by the rules of civilized warfare. I was taken to General Torrejon, who by this time had his whole force collected in the field. I found that some prisoners had already been taken; which, together with those I had and those which were subsequently brought in, amounted to 45 men, exclusive of Lieutenant Kane and myself. Four were wounded. I know nothing certain of the fate of Captain Thornton and Lieutenant Mason: the latter I did not see after the fight commenced. I am convinced they both died bravely. The former I know was unhorsed, and killed, as I learn, in single combat, by Romano Falcon. Lieutenant Mason's spurs were seen, after the fight, in possession of the enemy. The brave Sergeant Tredo fell in the first charge. Sergeant Smith was unhorsed and killed. The bodies of seven men were found, including, as I believe, the two officers above mentioned.

I was brought to Matamoras to-day about 4 o'clock, and I take pleasure in stating that since our surrender I and my brave companions in misfortune have been treated with uniform kindness and attention. It may soften the rigors of war for you to be informed fully of this fact. Lieutenant Kane and myself are living with General Ampudia: we lodge in his hotel, eat at his table, and his frank, agreeable manner and generous hospitality almost make us forget our captivity. General Arista received us in the most gracious manner; said that his nation had been regarded as barbarous, and that he wished to prove to us the contrary. Told Lieutenant Kane and myself that we should receive half pay, and our men should receive ample rations, and in lieu of it for to-day 25 cents a piece. On declining the boon on the part of Lieutenant Kane and myself, and a request that we might be permitted to send to camp for money, he said no; that he could not permit it; that he intended to supply all our wants himself. These promises have already been fulfilled in part.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
W. J. HARDEE,  
Captain 2d Dragoons.

Captain William J. Hardee, at Matamoras, Mexico, to  
Brigadier-General Zachary Taylor, at camp opposite  
Matamoras. Dispatch communicating particulars of "Thornton  
Skirmish." Matamoras, Mexico, April 26, 1846. National Defense  
University, Case Study, The U.S.-Mexico War National Defense  
University, Norfolk Virginia, 2006. [https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/  
fulltext/u2/a480587.pdf](https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a480587.pdf)

[20]

## President James Polk Calls for War with Mexico

**In this address from 1846, President James Polk calls for war with Mexico after receiving news of open warfare between Mexican and U.S. soldiers in “The Thornton Affair.”**

James K. Polk, President of the United States at Washington, D.C., to the Congress of the United States. A special message calling for a declaration of war against Mexico.

Washington, May 11, 1846.

To the Senate and the House of Representatives:

The existing state of the relations between the United States and Mexico renders it proper that I should bring the subject to the consideration of Congress. In my message at the commencement of your present session, the state of these relations, the causes which led to the suspension of diplomatic intercourse between the two countries in March, 1845, and the long-continued and unredressed wrongs and injuries committed by the Mexican Government on citizens of the United States in their persons and property were briefly set forth...

In my message at the commencement of the present session I informed you that upon the earnest appeal both of the Congress and convention of Texas I had ordered an efficient military force to take a position “between the Nueces and Del Norte”

(Rio Del Norte or Rio Grande). This had become necessary to meet a threatened invasion of Texas by the Mexican forces, for which extensive military preparations had been made. The invasion was threatened solely because Texas had determined, in accordance with a solemn resolution of the Congress of the United States, to annex herself to our Union, and under these circumstances it was plainly our duty to extend our protection over her citizens and soil.

This force was concentrated at Corpus Christi, and remained there until after I had received such information from Mexico as rendered it probable, if not certain, that the Mexican Government would refuse to receive our envoy.

Meantime Texas, by the final act of our Congress, had become an integral part of our Union. The Congress of Texas, by its act of December 19, 1836, had declared the Rio del Norte to be the boundary of that Republic. Its jurisdiction had been extended and exercised beyond the Nueces. The country between that river and the Del Norte had been represented in the Congress and in the convention of Texas, had thus taken part in the act of annexation itself, and is now included within one of our Congressional districts. Our own Congress had, moreover, with great unanimity, by the act approved December 31, 1845, recognized the country beyond the Nueces as a part of our territory by including it within our own revenue system, and a revenue officer to reside within that district had been appointed by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. It became, therefore, of urgent necessity to provide for the defense of that portion of our country. Accordingly, on the 13th of January last instructions were issued to the general in command of these troops to occupy the left bank of the Del Norte. This river, which is the southwestern boundary of the State of Texas, is an exposed frontier. From this quarter invasion was threatened; upon it and in its immediate vicinity, in the judgment of high military experience, are the proper stations for the protecting forces of the Government. In addition to this important consideration, several others occurred to induce this movement. Among these are the facilities afforded by the ports at Brazos Santiago and the mouth of the Del Norte for the reception of supplies by sea, the stronger and more healthy

military positions, the convenience for obtaining a ready and a more abundant supply of provisions, water, fuel, and forage, and the advantages which are afforded by the Del Norte in forwarding supplies to such posts as may be established in the interior and upon the Indian frontier.

The movement of the troops to the Del Norte was made by the commanding general under positive instructions to abstain from all aggressive acts toward Mexico or Mexican citizens and to regard the relations between that Republic and the United States as peaceful unless she should declare war or commit acts of hostility indicative of a state of war. He was specially directed to protect private property and respect personal rights.

The Army moved from Corpus Christi on the 11th of March, and on the 28th of that month arrived on the left bank of the Del Norte opposite to Matamoras, where it encamped on a commanding position (Fort Brown), which since been strengthened by the erection of fieldworks. A depot has also been established at Point Isabel, near the Brazos Santiago, 30 miles in rear of the encampment. The selection of his position was necessarily confided to the judgment of the general in command.

The Mexican forces at Matamoras assumed a belligerent attitude, and on the 12th of April General Ampudia, then in command, notified General Taylor to break up his camp within twenty-four hours and to retire beyond the Nueces River, and in the event of this failure to comply with these demands announced that arms, and arms alone, must decide the question. But no open act of hostility was committed until the 24th of April. On that day General Arista, who had succeeded to the command of the Mexican forces, communicated to General Taylor that "he considered hostilities commenced and should prosecute them." A party of dragoons of 63 men and officers were on the same day dispatched from the American camp up the Rio del Norte, on its left bank, to ascertain whether the Mexican troops had crossed or were preparing to cross the river, "became engaged with a large body of these troops, and after a short affair, in which some 16 were killed and wounded, appear to have been surrounded and compelled to surrender.

The grievous wrongs perpetrated by Mexico upon our citizens

throughout a long period of years remain unredressed, and solemn treaties pledging her public faith for this redress have been disregarded. A government either unable or unwilling to enforce the execution of such treaties fails to perform one of its plainest duties.

Our commerce with Mexico has been almost annihilated. It was formerly highly beneficial to both nations, but our merchants have been deterred from prosecuting it by the system of outrage and extortion which the Mexican authorities have pursued against them, whilst their appeals through their own Government for indemnity have been made in vain. Our forbearance has gone to such an extreme as to be mistaken in its character. Had we acted with vigor in repelling the insults and redressing the injuries inflicted by Mexico at the commencement, we should doubtless have escaped all the difficulties in which we are now involved.

Instead of this, however, we have been exerting our best efforts to propitiate her good will. Upon the pretext that Texas, a nation as independent as herself, thought proper to unite its destinies with our own, she has affected to believe that we have severed her rightful territory, and in official proclamations and manifestoes has repeatedly threatened to make war upon us for the purpose of reconquering Texas. In the meantime we have tried every effort at reconciliation. The cup of forbearance had been exhausted even before the recent information from the frontier of the Del Norte. But now, after reiterated menaces, Mexico has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our territory and shed American blood upon the American soil. She has proclaimed that hostilities have commenced, and that the two nations are now at war.

As war exists, and, notwithstanding all our efforts to avoid it, exists by the act of Mexico herself, we are called upon by every consideration of duty and patriotism to vindicate with decision the honor, the rights, and the interests of our country.

The most energetic and prompt measures and the immediate appearance in arms or a large and overpowering force are recommended to Congress as the most certain and efficient means of bringing the existing collision with Mexico to a speedy and successful termination.

In making these recommendations I deem it proper to declare that it is my anxious desire not only to terminate hostilities speedily, but to bring all matters in dispute between this Government and Mexico to an early and amicable adjustment; and in this view I shall be prepared to renew negotiations whenever Mexico shall be ready to receive propositions or to propositions of her own.

I transmit herewith a copy of the correspondence between our envoy to Mexico and the Mexican minister for foreign affairs, and so much of the correspondence between that envoy and the Secretary of State and between the Secretary of War and the general in command on the Del Norte as is necessary to a full understanding of the subject.

JAMES K. POLK.

James K. Polk, President of the United States at Washington, D.C., to the Congress of the United States. "A special message calling for a declaration of war against Mexico." Washington, May 11, 1846.

Carl Nebel's Lithograph depicting the "Battle of Palo Alto" north of present-day Brownsville, Texas. The background landscape more closely resembles the interior of northern Mexico or western Texas.



[21]

## Congressman Abraham Lincoln's "Spot Resolutions"

**In a series of statements known as the "Spot Resolutions," Abraham Lincoln challenged President James Polk's assertion that 'American blood shed on the American soil' led to war with Mexico. Lincoln became one of the most prominent critics of the war in Congress.**

Resolved, By the House of Representatives, that the President of the United States be respectfully requested to inform this House:

First. Whether the spot on which the blood of our citizens was shed, as in his message declared, was or was not within the territory of Spain, at least after the treaty of 1819, until the Mexican revolution.

Second. Whether that spot is or is not within the territory which was wrested from Spain by the revolutionary government of Mexico.

Third. Whether that spot is or is not within a settlement of people, which settlement has existed ever since long before the Texas revolution, and until its inhabitants fled before the U.S. Army.

Fourth. Whether that settlement is or is not isolated from any and all other settlements by the Gulf and the Rio Grande on the



south and west, and by wide uninhabited regions on the north and east.

Fifth. Whether the people of that settlement, or a majority of them, or any of them, have ever submitted themselves to the government or laws of Texas or of the United States, by consent or by compulsion, either by accepting office, or voting at elections, or paying tax, or serving on juries, or having process served upon them, or in any other way.

Sixth. Whether the people of that settlement did or did not flee from the approach of the U.S. Army, leaving unprotected their homes and their growing crops, before the blood was shed, as in the message stated; and whether the first blood, so shed, was or was not shed within the inclosure of one of the people who had thus fled from it.

Seventh. Whether our citizens, whose blood was shed, as in his message declared, were or were not, at that time, armed officers and soldiers, sent into that settlement by the military order of the President, through the Secretary of War.

Eighth. Whether the military force of the United States was or was not so sent into that settlement after General Taylor had more than once intimated to the War Department that, in his opinion, no such movement was necessary to the defence or protection of Texas.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, Rep. Illinois

Representative Abraham Lincoln, Resolutions in The United States House Of Representatives, December 22, 1847

[22]

## Frank Edwards Account of the Texas Rangers.

**This is an excerpt from the diary of Frank Edwards, who marched with Alexander Doniphan's army from New Mexico to Nuevo León during the U.S.-Mexico War. He witnessed and described executions by Texas Rangers in northern Mexico.**

Taking a stroll through the town of Cerralvo (Nuevo León), I found, sitting under a tree, dealing monte (a popular card game of the time), a genuine specimen of the Texian (early word for Texan) Ranger. His name, he said, was John Smith – a name which I thought I heard before. In height he was about six feet four inches of a stout sinewy frame, dressed in a mongrel attire, his coat being of American manufacture, his pantaloons Mexican, and his belt Indian. A fine white shirt, open some distance down, tied with a black silk handkerchief, studiously knotted, and a Mexican sombrero completed his dress.

By his side was his younger brother, about fifteen years old, dressed, with little variation, in the same style, with two enormous silver-mounted holster pistols in his waist, one under each arm. The elder had a quantity of silver buttons and little ornaments on his hatband and clothes; while on the faces of both, the word *desperado* was indelibly stamped.

I sat down by John Smith and drew him into conversation, he told me that the United States did not give the Rangers any

rations either for man or horse, but paid an equivalent and that they procured their subsistence out of the Mexicans. And the process of doing this he graphically described;

“Waal, you see when we want anything, a few if us start off to some rich hacienda near here, and tell the proprietor we must have so much of provisions. Waal, of course he don’t like that so much, so he refuses. One of us just knots a lasso ‘round the old devil’s neck, and fastens it to his saddle-bow; first passing it over the limb of some tree; then mounting his horse he starts off a few feet giving him a hoist, and then returns dropping him down again. After a few such swings, he soon provides what we have called for. Perhaps you think we’ve done with him then, eh? Not by a long shot. We have to jerk him a few times more, and then the money or gold dust is handed out. When we’ve got everything out of him we let the yellow devil go. We don’t hurt him much, and he soon gets over it.”

Who can wonder at the Mexican becoming a guerrilla?

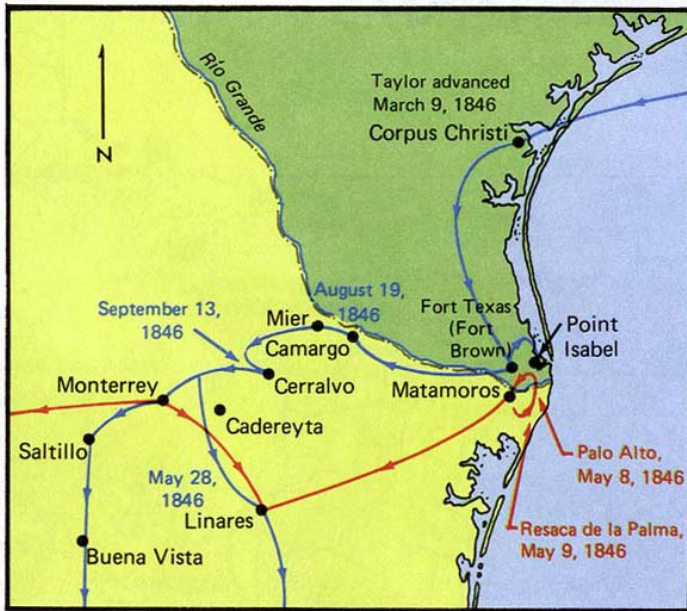
I’ve been credibly informed that when these Rangers are sent out on scouting parties, a Mexican guide is generally provided, but he never returns; the Texians always shooting him on some pretext or other before he gets back. Their usual mode is to frighten him with threats, and, after putting him under guard, to have one of their number go up to the poor fellow, and advise him to run off immediately he sees the sentinel’s back is turned. This he does, and the sentinel, having received his cue, shoots him while attempting to escape.

One of the most dastardly acts I ever heard of was perpetrated by half a dozen Texian officers a short time before we came down. They had lost their way, and hired a Mexican to show him to their camp, which he faithfully performed; but when they came in sight of it, they drew lots to see who should shoot their faithful and unsuspecting guide – the one on whom the lot fell, immediately drew a pistol and shot him.

Most of these Rangers are men who have been either prisoners in Mexico, or, in some way, injured by Mexicans, and they, therefore, spare none, but shoot down every one they meet. It is said that the bushes, skirting the road from Monterrey southward, are strewed with the skeletons of Mexicans sacrificed by these desperadoes.

While we rested at Cerralvo, I witnessed the execution of a Mexican supposed to be one of Urrea's lawless band. The Texians pretended to consider him as such; but there was not doubt this was only used as a cloak to cover their insatiable desire to destroy those they so bitterly hate. A furlough was found upon this Mexican, from his army, to visit his family, ending as our furloughs do, that should he overstay his leave of absence, he would be considered a deserter. This time he had considerably overstayed; and he himself stated that he had never intended to return, being in favor of the Americans. But the Rangers tried him by a court-martial; and adjudged him to be shot that very day. As the hour struck, he was led into the public plaza; and five Rangers took their post a few feet off, as executioners. The condemned coolly pulled out his flint and steel, and little paper cigarito; and, striking a light, commenced smoking as calmly as can possibly be imagined and – in two minutes – fell a corpse, with the still smoking cigarito yet between his lips. I did not see a muscle of his face quiver, when the rifles were leveled at him, but he looked coolly at his executioners, pressing a small cross, which hung to his neck, firmly against his breast. I turned from the scene sickened at heart.

Frank Edwards, A Campaign in New Mexico with Colonel Doniphan, (London: Hodson, 1848). (<https://hdl.handle.net/2027/nyp.33433115687398>)



**TAYLOR'S CAMPAIGN, MARCH 1846–FEBRUARY 1847**

Copyright 1976, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System. All rights reserved.

[23]

## Susan Shelby Magoffin's Account of New Mexico

**Susan Shelby Magoffin accompanied her husband, a merchant who followed Alexander Doniphan's forces from New Mexico to the lower Rio Grande. Her diary, from 1847, reveals the images U.S. travelers had of frontier Mexicans during the U.S.-Mexico War.**

“Wednesday 26th. We got in there about 2 o'clock. P.M., and dinner was called for...And then the dinner half a dozen tortillas [pancakes] made of blue corn, and not a plate, but wrapped in a napkin – twin brother to the last table cloth. Oh how my heart sickened, to say nothing of my stomach, a cheese of, the kind we saw yesterday from the Mora, entirely speckled over, and two earthen ollas [ollas-jugs] of a mixture of meat, chilly verde [green pepper] & onions boiled together completed course No. 1. We had neither knives, forks or spoons, but made as good substitutes as we could by doubling a piece of tortilla, at every mouthful-but by the by there were few mouthfuls taken, for I could not eat a dish so strong, and unaccustomed to my palate.”

“Thursday 27. Near San Miguel. The woman slap about with their arms and necks bare, perhaps their bosoms exposed (and they are none of the prettiest or whitest) if they are about to cross the little creek that is near all the villages, regardless of those about them, they pull their dresses, which in the first place

but little more than cover their calves-up above their knees and paddle through the water like ducks, sloshing and spattering everything about them. Some of them wear leather shoes, from the States, but most have buckskin mockersins, Indian style."

"Friday 28th. This has been rather a more agreeable day than yesterday, though we met with a little accident this morning. At the little creek the other side of San Miguel the carriage tongue broke entirely out, and we were in rather a critical situation as to traveling, till Lieutenant Warner came up with his wagons, and we got two carpenters he had with him to make a new tongue. This required two hours time. As usual the villagers collected to see the curiosity. many of the mujeres came to the carriage shook hands and talked with me. One of them brought some tortillas, new goats milk and stewed kid's meat with onions, and I found it much more palatable than "the dinner at the Vegas". They are decidedly polite, easy in their manners, perfectly free &c."

"Saturday 29th. I have visited this morning the ruins of an ancient pueblo, or village, now desolate and a home for the wild beast and bird of the forest. It created sad thoughts when I found myself riding almost heedlessly over the work of those once mighty people. There perhaps was pride, power and wealth, carried to its utter limit, for here 'tis said the great Montezuma once lived, though 'tis probably a "false tradition." But now something of what my own eyes witnessed. The only part standing is the church. We got off our horses at the door and went in, and I was truly awed. I should think it was sixty feet by thirty. As is the custom among the present inhabitants of Mexico, this pueblo is built of unburnt bricks and stones. The ceiling is very high and doleful in appearance; the sleepers are carved in hieroglyphical figures, as is also the great door, alter and indeed all the little wood-work about it, showing that if they were uncivilized or half-civilized as we generally believe them, they had at least an idea of grandeur."

Sunday 30th. "They say this is our last evening out, that tomorrow we will see Santa Fe. And to this I shall not object, if were to stay there a whole winter, or even till winter, I must be in preparing my house." "I do think I have walked three or four miles today; before noon I rode horseback over all the bad

paces in the road, but this P.M. I have walked. It will not hurt me though, and especially as much as jolting in the carriage over hills and rough road we have passed, and being frightened half to death all the while."

Santa Fe. August 31st 1846. "It is really hard to realize it, that I am here in my own house, in a place too where I once would have thought it folly to think of visiting. I have entered the city in a year that will always be remembered by my countrymen; and under the "Star-Spangled banner" too, the first American lady, who has come under the auspices, and some of our company seem disposed to make me the first under any circumstances that ever crossed the Plains. We arrived last night, and at such a late hour it was rather difficult for me to form any idea of the city. I knew it is situated in a valley; and is to be seen from the top of a long hill, down which I walked; this leads into "the street," which as in any other city has squares; but I must say they are singularly occupied. On one square may be a dwelling-house, a church or something of the kind, and immediately opposite to it occupying the whole square is a cornfield, fine ornament to a city, that." – Susan Shelby Magoffin.

Susan Shelby Magoffin, Down the Santa Fe Trail and into Mexico: The Diary of Susan Shelby Magoffin (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982.



[24]

## Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the U.S.-Mexico War and redrew the boundaries of North America. These are some significant sections. Article V describes the geography of the new border. Articles 8 and 9 contend with the rights of Mexican citizens in annexed lands. Article 11 contains pledges to limit the power of independent Native American nations and end captive trading.

*TREATY OF PEACE, FRIENDSHIP, LIMITS, AND SETTLEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES CONCLUDED AT GUADALUPE HIDALGO, FEBRUARY 2, 1848; RATIFICATION ADVISED BY SENATE, WITH AMENDMENTS, MARCH 10, 1848; RATIFIED BY PRESIDENT, MARCH 16, 1848; RATIFICATIONS EXCHANGED AT QUERETARO, MAY 30, 1848; PROCLAIMED, JULY 4, 1848.*

IN THE NAME OF ALMIGHTY GOD

The United States of America and the United Mexican States animated by a sincere desire to put an end to the calamities of the war which unhappily exists between the two Republics and to establish Upon a solid basis relations of peace and friendship, which shall confer reciprocal benefits upon the citizens of both, and assure the concord, harmony, and mutual confidence wherein the two people should live, as good neighbors have

for that purpose appointed their respective plenipotentiaries, that is to say: The President of the United States has appointed Nicholas P. Trist, a citizen of the United States, and the President of the Mexican Republic has appointed Don Luis Gonzaga Cuevas, Don Bernardo Couto, and Don Miguel Atristain, citizens of the said Republic; Who, after a reciprocal communication of their respective full powers, have, under the protection of Almighty God, the author of peace, arranged, agreed upon, and signed the following: Treaty of Peace, Friendship, Limits, and Settlement between the United States of America and the Mexican Republic.

#### ARTICLE V

The boundary line between the two Republics shall commence in the Gulf of Mexico, three leagues from land, opposite the mouth of the Rio Grande, otherwise called Rio Bravo del Norte, or Opposite the mouth of its deepest branch, if it should have more than one branch emptying directly into the sea; from thence up the middle of that river, following the deepest channel, where it has more than one, to the point where it strikes the southern boundary of New Mexico; thence, westwardly, along the whole southern boundary of New Mexico (which runs north of the town called Paso) to its western termination; thence, northward, along the western line of New Mexico, until it intersects the first branch of the river Gila; (or if it should not intersect any branch of that river, then to the point on the said line nearest to such branch, and thence in a direct line to the same); thence down the middle of the said branch and of the said river, until it empties into the Rio Colorado; thence across the Rio Colorado, following the division line between Upper and Lower California, to the Pacific Ocean.

The southern and western limits of New Mexico, mentioned in the article, are those laid down in the map entitled "Map of the United Mexican States, as organized and defined by various acts of the Congress of said republic, and constructed according to the best authorities. Revised edition. Published at New York, in 1847, by J. Disturnell," of which map a copy is added to this treaty, bearing the signatures and seals of the undersigned Plenipotentiaries. And, in order to preclude all difficulty in tracing upon the ground the limit separating Upper from Lower

California, it is agreed that the said limit shall consist of a straight line drawn from the middle of the Rio Gila, where it unites with the Colorado, to a point on the coast of the Pacific Ocean, distant one marine league due south of the southernmost point of the port of San Diego, according to the plan of said port made in the year 1782 by Don Juan Pantoja, second sailing-master of the Spanish fleet, and published at Madrid in the year 1802, in the atlas to the voyage of the schooners *Sutil* and *Mexicana*; of which plan a copy is hereunto added, signed and sealed by the respective Plenipotentiaries.

In order to designate the boundary line with due precision, upon authoritative maps, and to establish upon the ground land-marks which shall show the limits of both republics, as described in the present article, the two Governments shall each appoint a commissioner and a surveyor, who, before the expiration of one year from the date of the exchange of ratifications of this treaty, shall meet at the port of San Diego, and proceed to run and mark the said boundary in its whole course to the mouth of the Rio Bravo del Norte. They shall keep journals and make out plans of their operations; and the result agreed upon by them shall be deemed a part of this treaty, and shall have the same force as if it were inserted therein. The two Governments will amicably agree regarding what may be necessary to these persons, and also as to their respective escorts, should such be necessary.

The boundary line established by this article shall be religiously respected by each of the two republics, and no change shall ever be made therein, except by the express and free consent of both nations, lawfully given by the General Government of each, in conformity with its own constitution.

#### ARTICLE VIII

Mexicans now established in territories previously belonging to Mexico, and which remain for the future within the limits of the United States, as defined by the present treaty, shall be free to continue where they now reside, or to remove at any time to the Mexican Republic, retaining the property which they possess in the said territories, or disposing thereof, and removing the proceeds wherever they please, without their

being subjected, on this account, to any contribution, tax, or charge whatever.

Those who shall prefer to remain in the said territories may either retain the title and rights of Mexican citizens, or acquire those of citizens of the United States. But they shall be under the obligation to make their election within one year from the date of the exchange of ratifications of this treaty; and those who shall remain in the said territories after the expiration of that year, without having declared their intention to retain the character of Mexicans, shall be considered to have elected to become citizens of the United States.

In the said territories, property of every kind, now belonging to Mexicans not established there, shall be inviolably respected. The present owners, the heirs of these, and all Mexicans who may hereafter acquire said property by contract, shall enjoy with respect to it guarantees equally ample as if the same belonged to citizens of the United States.

#### ARTICLE IX

The Mexicans who, in the territories aforesaid, shall not preserve the character of citizens of the Mexican Republic, conformably with what is stipulated in the preceding article, shall be incorporated into the Union of the United States. and be admitted at the proper time (to be judged of by the Congress of the United States) to the enjoyment of all the rights of citizens of the United States, according to the principles of the Constitution; and in the mean time, shall be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty and property, and secured in the free exercise of their religion without restriction.

#### ARTICLE XI

Considering that a great part of the territories, which, by the present treaty, are to be comprehended for the future within the limits of the United States, is now occupied by savage tribes, who will hereafter be under the exclusive control of the Government of the United States, and whose incursions within the territory of Mexico would be prejudicial in the extreme, it is solemnly agreed that all such incursions shall be forcibly restrained by the Government of the United States whensoever this may be necessary; and that when they cannot be prevented,

they shall be punished by the said Government, and satisfaction for the same shall be exacted all in the same way, and with equal diligence and energy, as if the same incursions were meditated or committed within its own territory, against its own citizens.

It shall not be lawful, under any pretext whatever, for any inhabitant of the United States to purchase or acquire any Mexican, or any foreigner residing in Mexico, who may have been captured by Indians inhabiting the territory of either of the two republics; nor to purchase or acquire horses, mules, cattle, or property of any kind, stolen within Mexican territory by such Indians.

And in the event of any person or persons, captured within Mexican territory by Indians, being carried into the territory of the United States, the Government of the latter engages and binds itself, in the most solemn manner, so soon as it shall know of such captives being within its territory, and shall be able so to do, through the faithful exercise of its influence and power, to rescue them and return them to their country. or deliver them to the agent or representative of the Mexican Government. The Mexican authorities will, as far as practicable, give to the Government of the United States notice of such captures; and its agents shall pay the expenses incurred in the maintenance and transmission of the rescued captives; who, in the mean time, shall be treated with the utmost hospitality by the American authorities at the place where they may be. But if the Government of the United States, before receiving such notice from Mexico, should obtain intelligence, through any other channel, of the existence of Mexican captives within its territory, it will proceed forthwith to effect their release and delivery to the Mexican agent, as above stipulated.

For the purpose of giving to these stipulations the fullest possible efficacy, thereby affording the security and redress demanded by their true spirit and intent, the Government of the United States will now and hereafter pass, without unnecessary delay, and always vigilantly enforce, such laws as the nature of the subject may require. And, finally, the sacredness of this obligation shall never be lost sight of by the said Government, when providing for the removal of the Indians from any portion of the said territories, or for its being

settled by citizens of the United States; but, on the contrary, special care shall then be taken not to place its Indian occupants under the necessity of seeking new homes, by committing those invasions which the United States have solemnly obliged themselves to restrain.

[25]

## Juan Cortina's Call to Arms in Brownsville

**Juan Nepomuceno Cortina, of Camargo, Tamaulipas, was a soldier and prominent figure in Mexican resistance to the occupation and division of the lower Rio Grande. This is his 1859 proclamation in response to law enforcement's abuse of Mexican Americans.**

**"Juan Nepomuceno Cortina to the inhabitants of the State of Texas, and especially to those of the city of Brownsville."**

An event of grave importance, in which it has fallen to my lot to figure as the principal actor since the morning of the 28th instant (September 28, 1859); doubtless keeps you in suspense with regard to the progress of its consequences. There is no need of fear. Orderly people and honest citizens are inviolable to us in their persons and interests. Our object, as you have seen, has been to chastise the villainy of our enemies, which heretofore has gone unpunished. These have connived with each other, and form, so to speak, a perfidious inquisitorial lodge to persecute and rob us, without any cause, and for no other crime on our part than that of being of Mexican origin, considering us, doubtless, destitute of those gifts which they themselves do not possess.

To defend ourselves, and making use of the sacred right of self-preservation, we have assembled in a popular meeting with

a view of discussing a means by which to put an end to our misfortunes.

Our identity of origin, our relationship, and the community of our sufferings, has been, as it appears, the cause of our embracing, directly, the proposed object which led us to enter your beautiful city, clothes with the imposing aspect of our exasperation.

The assembly organized, and headed by your humble servant, (thanks to the confidence which he inspired as one of the most aggrieved,) we have careered over the streets of the city in search of our adversaries, inasmuch as justice, being administered by their own hands, the supremacy of the law has failed to accomplish its object.

Some of them, rashly remiss in complying with our demand, have perished for having sought to carry their animosity beyond the limits allowed by their precarious position. Three of them have died – all criminal, wicked men, notorious among the people for their misdeeds. The others, still more unworthy and wretched, dragged themselves through the mire to escape our anger, and now, perhaps, with their usual bravado, pretend to be the cause of an infinity of evils, which might have been avoided but for their cowardice.

They concealed themselves, and we were loath to attack them within the dwellings of others, fearing that their cause might be confounded with that of respectable persons, as at last, to our sorrow, did happen. On the other hand, it behooves us to maintain that it was unjust to give the affair such a terrible aspect, and to represent it as of a character foreboding evil; some having carried their blindness so far as to implore the aid of Mexico, alleging as a reason that their persons and property were exposed to vandalism. Were any outrages committed by us during the time we had possession of the city, when we had it in our power to become the arbiters of its fate? Will our enemies be so blind, base, or unthinking, as to deny the evidence of facts? Will there be one to say that he was molested, or that his house was robbed or burned down.

The unfortunate Viviano Garcia fell a victim to his generous behavior; and with such a lamentable occurrence before us on our very outset, we abstained from our purpose, horrified at



the thought of having to shed innocent blood without even the assurance that the vile men whom we sought would put aside their cowardice to accept our defiance.

These, as we have said, form, with a multitude of lawyers, a secret conclave, with all its ramifications, for the sole purpose of despoiling the Mexicans of the lands and usurp them afterwards. This is clearly proven by the conduct of one Adolph Glavecke, who, invested with the character of deputy sheriff, and in collusion with the said lawyers, has spread terror among the unwary, making them believe that he will hang the Mexicans and burn their ranches, &c., that by this means he might compel them to abandon the country, and thus accomplish their object. This is not a supposition – it is a reality; and notwithstanding the want of better proof, if this threat were not publicly known, all would feel persuaded that of this, and even more, are capable such criminal men as the one last mentioned, the marshal, the jailer, Morris, Neal, &c.

The first of these, in his history and behavior, has ever been infamous and traitorous. He is the assassin of the ill-starred Colonel Cross, Captain Woolsey, and Antonia Mireles, murdered by him at the rancho de las Prietas, the theatre of all his assassinations. It is he who instigated some, and aiding others, has been the author of a thousand misdeeds; and to put down the finger of scorn that ever points at him, and do away with the witnesses of his crimes, he has been foremost in persecuting us to death. The others are more or less stamped with ignominy, and we will tolerate them no longer in our midst, because they are obnoxious to tranquility and to our own welfare.

All truce between them and us is at an end, from the fact alone of our holding upon this soil our interests and property. And how can it be otherwise, when the ills that weigh upon the unfortunate republic of Mexico have obliged us for many heart-touching causes to abandon it and our possessions in it, or else become the victims of our principles or of the indigence to which its intestine disturbances had reduced us since the treaty of Guadalupe? When, every diligent and industrious, and desirous of enjoying the longed-for boon of liberty within the classic country of its origin, we were induced to naturalize

ourselves in it and form a part of the confederacy, flattered by the bright and peaceful prospect of living therein and inculcating in the bosoms of our children a feeling of gratitude towards a country beneath whose aegis we would have wrought their felicity and contributed with our conduct to give evidence to the whole world that all the aspirations of the Mexicans are confined to one only, that of being freemen; and that having secured this ourselves, those of the old country, notwithstanding their misfortunes, might have nothing to regret save the loss of a section of territory, but with the sweet satisfaction that their old fellow citizens lived therein, enjoying tranquility, as if Providence had so ordained to set them an example of the advantages to be derived from public peace and quietude; when, in fine, all has been but the baseless fabric of a dream, and our hopes having been defrauded in the most cruel manner in which disappointment can strike, there can be found no other solution to our problem than to make one effort, and at one blow destroy the obstacles to our prosperity.

It is necessary. The hour has arrived. Our oppressors number but six or eight. Hospitality and other noble sentiments shield them at present from our wrath, and such, as you have seen, are inviolable to us.

Innocent persons shall not suffer – no. But, if necessary, we will lead a wandering life, awaiting our opportunity to purge society of men so base that they degrade it with their opprobrium. Our families have returned as strangers to their old country to beg for an asylum. Our lands, if they are to be sacrificed to the avaricious covetousness of our enemies, will be rather so on account of our own vicissitudes. As to land, Nature will always grant us sufficient to support our frames, and we accept the consequences that may arise. Further, our personal enemies shall not possess our lands until they have fattened it with their own gore.

It remains for me to say that, separated as we are, by accident alone, from the other citizens of the city, and not having renounced our rights as North American citizens, we disapprove and energetically protest against the act of having caused a force of the national guards from Mexico to cross unto this side to ingraft themselves in a question so foreign to their country that

there is no excusing such weakness on the part of those who implored their aid.

JUAN NEPOMUCENO CORTINA

Juan Nepomuceno Cortina, Rancho Del Carmen, County of Cameron, September 30, 1859, Translation in U. S. Congress, House, Difficulties on the Southwestern Frontier, 36th Congress; 1st Session, 1860, H. Exec. Doc. 52, pp.70-82.)

[26]

## Ben Kinchlow's Narrative, A Slave in Brownsville and Freedman in South Texas

**Ben Kinchlow** gave an interview as part of a federal project to record the oral histories of former slaves. In this Works Progress Administration narrative, Kinchlow recounted his youth as a slave and early adulthood as a freedman and rancher. As with many such narratives, the interviewer attempted to replicate the speaker's dialect through spelling.

### **Ben Kinchlow's Narrative**

Ben Kinchlow, 91 (in 1937), was the son of Lizaer Moore, a half-white slave owned by Sandy Moore , Wharton Co., and Lad Kinchlow, a white man. When Ben was one year old his mother was freed and given some money. She was sent to Matamoros, Mexico and they lived there and at Brownsville, Texas, during the years before and directly following the Civil War. Ben and his wife, Liza , now live in Uvalde, Texas, in a neat little home. Ben has straight hair, a Roman nose, and his speech is like that of the early white settler. He is affable and enjoys recounting his experiences.

"I was birthed in 1846 in Wharton, Wharton County, in slavery times. My mother's name was Lizaer Moore. I think her master's name was Sandy Moore , and she went by his name. My father's name was Lad Kinchlow . My mother was a half-breed Negro;

my father was a white man of that same county. I don't know anything about my father. He was a white man, I know that. After I was borned and was one year old, my mother was set free and sent to Mexico to live. When we left Wharton, we was sent away in an ambulance. It was an old-time ambulance. It was what they called an ambulance — a four-wheeled concern pulled by two mules. That is what they used to traffic in. The big rich white folks would get in it and go to church or on a long journey. We landed safely into Matamoros, Mexico, just me and my mother and older brother. She had the means to live on till she got there and got acquainted. We stayed there about twelve years.

Then we moved back to Brownsville and stayed there until after all Negroes were free. She went to washing and she made lots of money at it. She charged by the dozen. Three or four handkerchiefs were considered a piece. She made good because she got \$2.50 a dozen for men washing and \$5 a dozen for women's clothes. I was married in February, 1879, to Christiana Temple, married at Matagorda, Matagorda County. I had six children by my first wife. Three boys and three girls. Two girls died. The other girl is in Gonzales County. Lawrence is here workin' on the Kincald Ranch and Andrew is workin' for John Monagin's dairy and Henry is seventy miles from Alpine. He's a highway boss. This was my first wife. Now I am married again and have been with this wife forty years. Her name was Eliza Dawson . No children born to this union.

The way we lived in those days the country was full of wild game, deer, wild hogs, turkey, duck, rabbits, 'possum, lions, quails, and so forth. You see, in them days they was all thinly settled and they was all neighbors. Most settlements was all Mexicans mostly; of course there was a few white people. In them days the country was all open and a man could go in there and settle down wherever he wanted to and wouldn't be molested a-tall. They wasn't molested till they commenced putting these fences and putting up these barbwire fences. You could ride all day and never open a gate. Maybe ride right up to a man's house and the just let down a bar or two. Sometime when we wanted fresh meat we went out and killed. We also could kill a calf or goat whenever we cared to because they were

plenty and no fence to stop you. We also had plenty milk and butter and home-made cheese. We did not have much coffee. You know the way we made our coffee? We just taken corn and parched it right brown and ground it up. Whenever we would get up furs and hides enough to go into market, a bunch of neighbors would get together and take ten to fifteen deer hides each and take 'em in to Brownsville and sell 'em and get their supplies. They paid twenty-five cents a pound for them. That's when we got our coffee, but we'd got so used to using corn-coffee, we didn't care whether we had that real coffee so much, because we had to be careful with our supplies, anyway. My recollection is that it was fifty cents a pound and it would be green coffee and you would have to roast it and grind it on a mill. We didn't have any sugar, and very rare thing to have flour. The deer was here by the hundreds. There was blue quail my goodness! You could get a bunch of these blue top-knot quail rounded up in a bunch of pear and, if they was any rooks, you could kill every one of 'em. If you could hit one and get 'im to flutterin', the others would bunch around him and you could kill every one of 'em with rooks. We lived very neighborly. When any of the neighbors killed fresh meat we always divided with one another. We all had a corn patch, about three or four acres. We did not have plows; we planted with a hoe. We were lucky in raisin' corn every year. Most all the neighbors had a little bunch of goats, cows, mares, and hogs. Our nearest market was forty miles, at old Brownsville.

When I was a boy I wore what was called shirt-tail. It was a long, loose shirt with no pants. I did not wear pants until I was about ten or twelve. The way we got our supplies, all the neighbors would go in together and send into town in a dump cart drawn by a mule. The main station was at Brownsville. It was thirty-five miles from where they'd change horses. They carried this mail to Edinburg, and it took four days. Sometimes they'd ride a horse or mule. We'd get our mail once a week. We got our mail at Brownsville. The country was very thinly settled then and of very few white people; most all Mexicans, living on the border. The country was open, no fences. Every neighbor had a little place. We didn't have any plows; we planted with a hoe and went along and raked the dirt over with our toes. We

had a grist mill too. I bet I've turned one a million miles. There was no hired work then. When a man was hired he got \$10 or \$12 per month, and when people wanted to brand or do other work, all the neighbors went together and helped without pay.

The most thing that we had to fear was Indians and cattle rustlers and wild animals. While I was yet on the border, the plantation owners had to send their cotton to the border to be shipped to other parts, so it was transferred by Negro slaves as drivers. Lots of times, when these Negroes got there and took the cotton from their wagon, they would then be persuaded to go across the border by Mexicans, and then they would never return to their master. That is how lots of Negroes got to be free.

The way they used to transfer the cotton these big cotton plantations east of here they'd take it to Brownsville and put it on the wharf and ship it from there. I can remember seeing, during the cotton season, fifteen or twenty teams hauling cotton, sometimes five or six, maybe eight bales on a wagon. You see, them steamboats used to run all up and down that river. I think this cotton went out to market at New Orleans and went right out into the Gulf. Our house was a log cabin with a log chimney da'bbed with mud. The cabin was covered with grass for a roof. The fireplace was the kind of stove we had. Mother cooked in Dutch ovens. Our main meal was corn bread and milk and grits with milk. That was a little bit coarser than meal. The way we used to cook it and the best flavored is to cook it out-of-doors in a Dutch oven. We called 'em corn dodgers. Now ash cakes, you have your dough pretty stiff and smooth off a place in the ashes and lay it right on the ashes and cover it up with ashes and when it got done, you could wipe every bit of the ashes off, and get you some butter and put on it. M-m-m! I tell you, its fine! There is another way of cookin' flour bread without a skillet or a stove, is to make up your dough stiff and roll it out thin and out it in strips and roll it on a green stick and just hold it over the coals, and it sure makes good bread. When one side cooks too fast, you can just turn it over, and have your stick long enough to keep it from burnin' your hands. How come me to learn this was: One time we were huntin' horse stock and there was an outfit along and the pack mule that was packed with our provisions and skillets and coffee pots and things we never did

carry much stuff, not even no beddin' the pack turned on the mule and we lost our skillet and none of us knowed it at the time. All of us was cooks, but that old Mexican that was along was the only one that knew how to cook bread that way....

WPA Slave Narrative Project, Texas Narratives, Volume 16, Part 2

Federal Writer's Project, United States Work Projects Administration (USWPA); Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

**Ben Kinchlow at age 91. Born to a white slaveholding father and an enslaved woman of mixed heritage, he spent his childhood in slavery and lived in Brownsville during the Civil War. After Juneteenth, he worked as a cowboy across southern Texas.**





Ben Kinchlow, Age 91. United States Texas, 1936. Between 1936 and 1938. Photograph.  
<https://www.loc.gov/item/mesnp162260/>.

[27]

## Texas Secession from the United States

**On February 2, 1861, Texas adopted this declaration, which described the official rationale for leaving the United States and joining the Confederate States of America.**

The government of the United States, by certain joint resolutions, bearing date the 1st day of March, in the year A.D. 1845, proposed to the Republic of Texas, then a free, sovereign and independent nation, the annexation of the latter to the former as one of the co-equal States thereof,

The people of Texas, by deputies in convention assembled, on the fourth day of July of the same year, assented to and accepted said proposals and formed a constitution for the proposed State, upon which on the 29th day of December in the same year, said State was formally admitted into the Confederated Union.

Texas abandoned her separate national existence and consented to become one of the Confederated States to promote her welfare, insure domestic tranquility and secure more substantially the blessings of peace and liberty to her people. She was received into the confederacy with her own constitution, under the guarantee of the federal constitution and the compact of annexation, that she should enjoy these blessings. She was received as a commonwealth holding, maintaining and protecting the institution known as negro

slavery—the servitude of the African to the white race within her limits—a relation that had existed from the first settlement of her wilderness by the white race, and which her people intended should exist in all future time. Her institutions and geographical position established the strongest ties between her and other slave-holding States of the confederacy. Those ties have been strengthened by association

But what has been the course of the government of the United States, and of the people and authorities of the non-slave-holding States, since our connection with them?

The controlling majority of the Federal Government, under various pretences and disguises, has so administered the same as to exclude the citizens of the Southern States, unless under odious and unconstitutional restrictions, from all the immense territory owned in common by all the States on the Pacific Ocean, for the avowed purpose of acquiring sufficient power in the common government to use it as a means of destroying the institutions of Texas and her sister slave-holding States.

By the disloyalty of the Northern States and their citizens and the imbecility of the Federal Government, infamous combinations of incendiaries and outlaws have been permitted in those States and the common territory of Kansas to trample upon the federal laws, to war upon the lives and property of Southern citizens in that territory, and finally, by violence and mob law, to usurp the possession of the same as exclusively the property of the Northern States.

The Federal Government, while but partially under the control of these our unnatural and sectional enemies, has for years almost entirely failed to protect the lives and property of the people of Texas against the Indian savages on our border, and more recently against the murderous forays of banditti from the neighboring territory of Mexico; and when our State government has expended large amounts for such purpose, the Federal Government has refused reimbursement therefor, thus rendering our condition more insecure and harrassing than it was during the existence of the Republic of Texas.

These and other wrongs we have patiently borne in the vain hope that a returning sense of justice and humanity would induce a different course of administration.

When we advert to the course of individual non-slave-holding States, and that [of] a majority of their citizens, our grievances assume far greater magnitude.

The States of Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Wisconsin, Michigan and Iowa, by solemn legislative enactments, have deliberately, directly or indirectly violated the 3rd clause of the 2nd section of the 4th article of the federal constitution, and laws passed in pursuance thereof; thereby annulling a material provision of the compact, designed by its framers to perpetuate amity between the members of the confederacy and to secure the rights of the slave-holdings States in their domestic institutions—a provision founded in justice and wisdom, and without the enforcement of which the compact fails to accomplish the object of its creation. Some of those States have imposed high fines and degrading penalties upon any of their citizens or officers who may carry out in good faith that provision of the compact, or the federal laws enacted in accordance therewith.

In all the non-slave-holding States, in violation of that good faith and comity which should exist between entirely distinct nations, the people have formed themselves into a great sectional party, now strong enough in numbers to control the affairs of each of those States, based upon the unnatural feeling of hostility to these Southern States and their beneficent and patriarchal system of African slavery, proclaiming the debasing doctrine of the equality of all men, irrespective of race or color—a doctrine at war with nature, in opposition to the experience of mankind, and in violation of the plainest revelations of the Divine Law. They demand the abolition of negro slavery throughout the confederacy, the recognition of political equality between the white and the negro races, and avow their determination to press on their crusade against us, so long as a negro slave remains in these States.

For years past this abolition organization has been actively sowing the seeds of discord through the Union, and has rendered the federal congress the arena for spreading firebrands and hatred between the slave-holding and non-slave-holding States.

By consolidating their strength, they have placed the slave-holding States in a hopeless minority in the federal congress, and rendered representation of no avail in protecting Southern rights against their exactions and encroachments.

They have proclaimed, and at the ballot box sustained, the revolutionary doctrine that there is a “higher law” than the constitution and laws of our Federal Union, and virtually that they will disregard their oaths and trample upon our rights.

They have for years past encouraged and sustained lawless organizations to steal our slaves and prevent their recapture, and have repeatedly murdered Southern citizens while lawfully seeking their rendition.

They have invaded Southern soil and murdered unoffending citizens, and through the press their leading men and a fanatical pulpit have bestowed praise upon the actors and assassins in these crimes, while the governors of several of their States have refused to deliver parties implicated and indicted for participation in such offences, upon the legal demands of the States aggrieved.

They have, through the mails and hired emissaries, sent seditious pamphlets and papers among us to stir up servile insurrection and bring blood and carnage to our firesides.

They have sent hired emissaries among us to burn our towns and distribute arms and poison to our slaves for the same purpose.

They have impoverished the slave-holding States by unequal and partial legislation, thereby enriching themselves by draining our substance.

They have refused to vote appropriations for protecting Texas against ruthless savages, for the sole reason that she is a slave-holding State.

And, finally, by the combined sectional vote of the seventeen non-slave-holding States, they have elected as president and vice-president of the whole confederacy two men whose chief claims to such high positions are their approval of these long continued wrongs, and their pledges to continue them to the final consummation of these schemes for the ruin of the slave-holding States.

In view of these and many other facts, it is meet that our own views should be distinctly proclaimed.

We hold as undeniable truths that the governments of the various States, and of the confederacy itself, were established exclusively by the white race, for themselves and their posterity; that the African race had no agency in their establishment; that they were rightfully held and regarded as an inferior and dependent race, and in that condition only could their existence in this country be rendered beneficial or tolerable.

That in this free government all white men are and of right ought to be entitled to equal civil and political rights; that the servitude of the African race, as existing in these States, is mutually beneficial to both bond and free, and is abundantly authorized and justified by the experience of mankind, and the revealed will of the Almighty Creator, as recognized by all Christian nations; while the destruction of the existing relations between the two races, as advocated by our sectional enemies, would bring inevitable calamities upon both and desolation upon the fifteen slave-holding States.

By the secession of six of the slave-holding States, and the certainty that others will speedily do likewise, Texas has no alternative but to remain in an isolated connection with the North, or unite her destinies with the South.

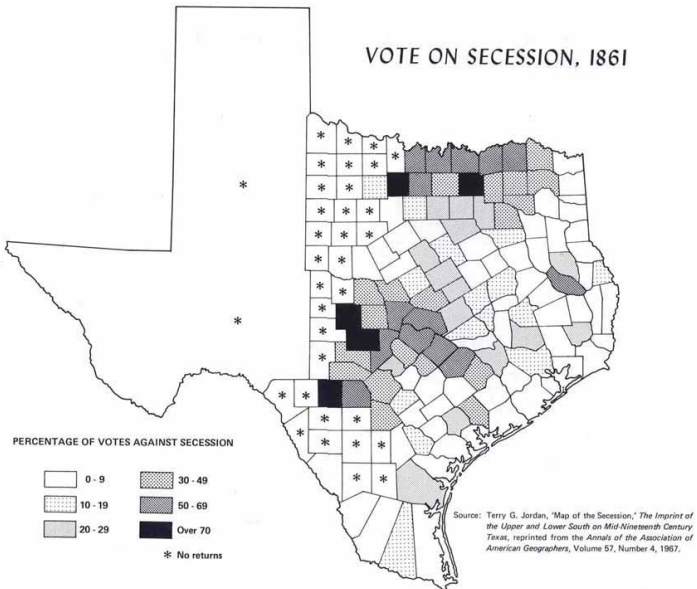
For these and other reasons, solemnly asserting that the federal constitution has been violated and virtually abrogated by the several States named, seeing that the federal government is now passing under the control of our enemies to be diverted from the exalted objects of its creation to those of oppression and wrong, and realizing that our own State can no longer look for protection, but to God and her own sons—We the delegates of the people of Texas, in Convention assembled, have passed an ordinance dissolving all political connection with the government of the United States of America and the people thereof and confidently appeal to the intelligence and patriotism of the freemen of Texas to ratify the same at the ballot box, on the 23rd day of the present month.

Adopted in Convention on the 2nd day of Feby, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-one and of the independence of Texas the twenty-fifth.

SOURCE:

Winkler, Ernest William, ed. Journal of the Secession Convention of Texas 1861, Edited From the Original in the Department of State.... Austin: Texas Library and Historical Commission, 1912, pp. 61-65.

<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/ref/abouttx/secession/2feb1861.html>



[28]

## Civil War Military Reports from Fort Brown

**When the Confederate Army held Fort Brown, a U.S. Consul reported on the area from a short distance away in “neutral” Matamoras. This underscores the intrigue that defined this area during the Civil War.**

Consulate of the United States of America,  
Matamoras, September 16, 1862

Sir: Your letter of the 12th, by Señor Zambrano, was received on the 14th, and judging from what he said to you, and what he is doing here, it would seem that he is giving much aid to the rebels through the influence of his office. Before he came here, the rebels were obliged to pay heavy duties on everything carried across the river; for instance, the export duties here on flour going to Texas was \$5 per barrel; it is now but \$1.50, it being put down by the influence of said Zambrano.

As to the cotton, there is not one pound in fifty that ever belonged to a Mexican, neither is there one bale in ten that ever remained on Mexican soil, with the exception of a small amount that is on its way down to Monterey, but has not arrived yet.

It is true that cotton has been shipped from this port while our blockading ships were here, as it was decided that as the cotton paid an import and export duty to Mexico; it has become naturalized, and the only way to prevent it would be to prevent



its crossing the frontier, which could only be done by occupying Fort Brown with a small force.

In my certificate I merely certify that they declare the cotton to be legally shipped from Matamoras. There is no doubt but that most of the trade with Matamoras is illegal.

I send down correspondence of Captain Hunter, in which you will see the course pursued by him to bring them terms, and which had the most satisfactory results.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

L. Pierce, Jr. U.S. Consul

United States. War Dept. The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies Official records of the Union and Confederate armies. Govt. Print. Off. Washington. Series I, 1-53; Series II, 1-8; Series III, 1-5; Series IV, 1-4 (1880 – 1901)

**Confederate and Union armies were not the only forces who had an interest in the lower Rio Grande. This dispatch from a Confederate officer at Fort Brown described the convergence of many interests in the region at the height of the Civil War.**

HEADQUARTERS LOWER RIO GRANDE

Fort Brown, January 26, 1863

Maj. A. G. Dickinson, Assistant Adjutant-General (CSA),  
Houston Tex.:

MAJOR: Owing to the fact that Brigadier-general Bee is en route to this post, I think it proper to address the commanding general directly, that he may be informed of the state of the frontier up to the latest moment without unnecessary delay.

I have the honor to report that I arrived at this post on the 16th instant (this month), having a large amount of Government funds in charge, which have been turned over to the proper disbursing officers.

On the 17th I assumed command of the Lower Rio Grande, and immediately issued orders, and took the necessary steps to carry out as soon as practicable the orders of the commanding general, as expressed in his orders to Brig. Gen. H. P. Bee.

I have to report a great want of transportation on this line, also a remarkable scarcity of grass, of which indeed the country is literally almost bare. As to corn, none can be purchased at present. These difficulties, along with the extremely low stage of

water on the Rio Grande, which prevents steamboat navigation, do not permit as rapid a movement of the troops as is to be desired.

I have consulted fully with Major Hart, quartermaster, and have given such orders to Capt F. J. Lynch, assistant quartermaster, as to secure a full supply of rations within sixty days for 5,000 men for six months. These supplies have generally to be ordered from the West Indies – more particularly corn. There is said to be a sufficient amount of flour at the mouth of the river, but the process of unloading vessels is very slow during the winter months. Last month, I understand, there were only two working days for the lighters.

I have had a special interview with the Governor of Tamaulipas, Mexico, also with several leading official of the city of Matamoras. They do not deny that there is a band of robbers and marauders in and about Mier, in their state, menacing our peaceful frontier relations, but owing to the absence of their military forces on service against the French at Tampico they are unable to lay hands on the outlaws.

There is no Mexican force at this time on the Lower Rio Grande. All their troops have been sent to Tampico, which place was evacuated by the French on the 14th instant and occupied the same day by Mexican forces.

The Governor and other authorities assure me of their determination to aid in every manner within their power to put a stop to all difficulties, tendering to me the authority to cross over on their soil to punish the outlaws.

I have not opened an official correspondence, preferring to await the arrival of Brigadier-General Bee, who is daily expected here.

The Mexican authorities, since the reported increase of our forces on this line, are evidently disposed to take more active steps to rid themselves of the (American Unionist) renegades who have infested Matamoras.

Major Hart, Quartermaster, who returned from the mouth of the river last night, informed me that on the 24th and 25th instant from 150 to 200 renegades were sent aboard the Abolition (Union) gunboat at the mouth of the river, and that the vessel was about to leave with them, destination supposed to be

New Orleans. This departure will leave the mouth of the river and Brazos Sant Iago clear of Abolition war vessels.

I have the honor to report the departure of the Hon. L.Q.C. Lamar, minister of the Confederate States to the Court of Russia, on the 25th instant, by the French vessel Malabar, bound to Havana The Hon. A. Superville was to have left on the same vessel. There are two French war vessels and one English at the mouth of the river.

I respectfully call the commanding general's attention to the fact of there being numerous Government agents on the frontier. As a general thing, they are men totally incompetent to transact most ordinary commercial business. They are constantly bidding one against another, causing the Government to pay excessive prices, and besides they throw a cloud of doubt over the transactions of useful and competent agents. Through them and others cotton permits are hawked about in Matamoras at the rate of a dollar a bale.

With the proper organization of a purchasing department the Government within the next six months can supply an army of 50,000 men with everything needed (except arms) though this port. But in order to accomplish this there must be but one agency, having at the same time entire control of cotton and transportation.

The Government need not, except in special instances, for a particular purpose of exigency, send abroad for supplies, but simply turn over the cotton upon delivery of goods at this place. I call the general's attention to this subject for the reason that action upon this subject will be necessary to sustain the troops on the Lower Rio Grande.

Up to this date I have not heard of the arrival of any of the forces ordered to the Rio Grande. Willke's battery at latest date had not moved from Corpus for want of horses. Four days ago I sent an express, directing the officers to press the necessary transportation and to move for this post as soon as possible.

I have the honor to be, your obedient servant,

P. N. Luckett

Colonel Commanding Lower Rio Grande, Fort Brown

P.S. – We have a New York Herald of the 10th instant, which admits fully the repulse of the Abolition forces at Vicksburg.

United States. War Dept. The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies Official records of the Union and Confederate armies. Govt. Print. Off. Washington. Series I, 1-53; Series II, 1-8; Series III, 1-5; Series IV, 1-4 (1880 - 1901)



UNION TROOP MOVEMENT IN SOUTH TEXAS, 1863-1864

[29]

## Photographs of Brownsville and Matamoros, 1864-1867

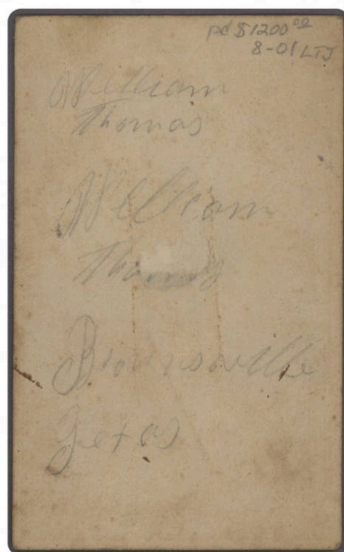
These photographs are from Brownsville and Matamoros and date from 1864 to 1867. The primary photographer in these images, Louis de Planque, was a German-French photographer who arrived in the region during the French intervention in Mexico. He photographed people from both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border and nearly all sides of the conflicts that marked the region from 1864 to 1867. A few of these photographs have unknown authors but appear to be from La Planque's studio.

Most photos have notes on the reserve that are included in the scan. Each image links to its original location in the DeGolyer Library.

Women in front of a house. The house is a *jacal*, a common structure for in this region with indigenous origins. It appears that the family is using shipping crates to reinforce a wall.

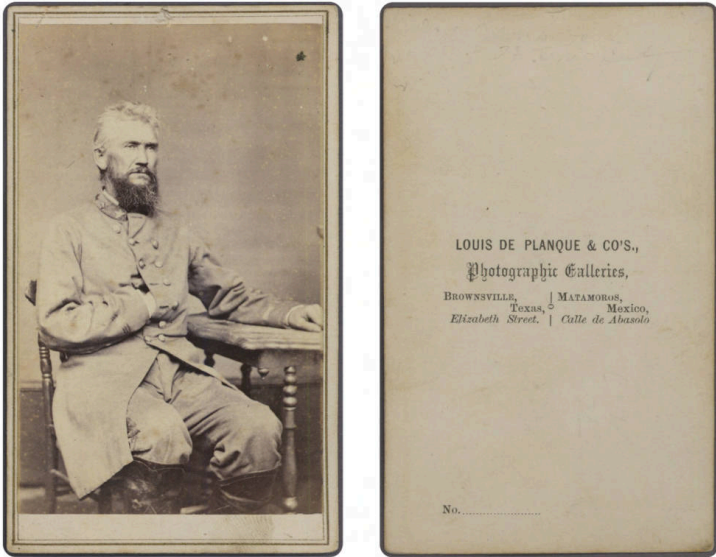


Pvt. William Thomas, was a soldier in the “Ninth U.S. Colored Troops,” one of the Union Army formations with African American enlisted soldiers through the Civil War era. Pvt. Thomas served at Fort Brown from July 1865 to October 1866.

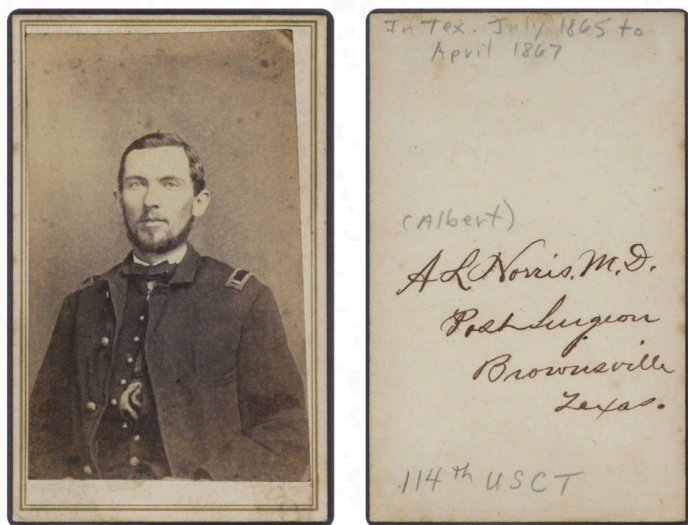


John Salmon “Rip” Ford was a Texas Ranger and Confederate Army Colonel. Before the Civil War he led Texas

**Rangers in their campaign against Juan Cortina and his supporters.**

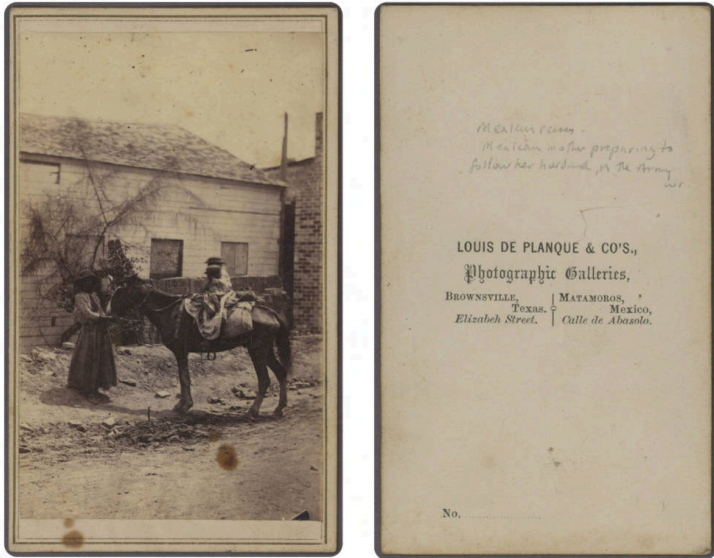


**A.L. Norris, MD. Norris was a U.S. Army surgeon assigned to an African American unit stationed at Fort Brown after the Civil War. This is his 1867 portrait in Brownsville.**



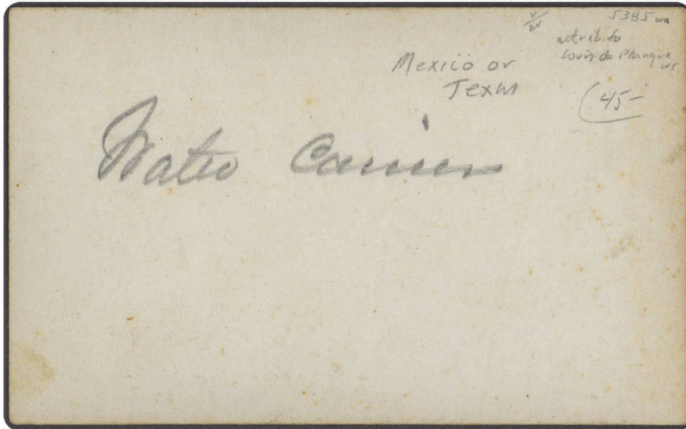
This photograph has the note, “Mexican mother preparing to follow her husband in the Army.” This is possibly an early example of the role of *soldaderas* in Mexican military history. It is not clear which “army” is involved, as there were many overlapping conflicts in the region.





Tomás Mejía, a veteran of the conflict between Mexico and the United States was an indigenous Mexican officer who became a commander in the French-backed imperial forces of Maximilian. Mejía fought against the republican forces of the indigenous Mexican President Benito Juárez.

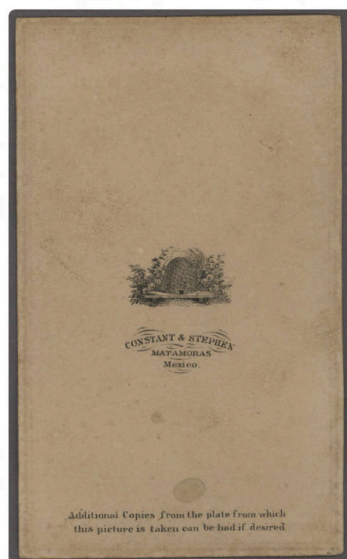




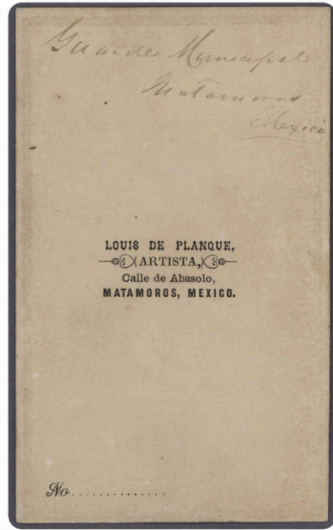
Levee Street in Brownsville near the Rio Grande. Cross-border commerce, including extensive smuggling, made Brownsville and Matamoros major trade centers during the Civil War.



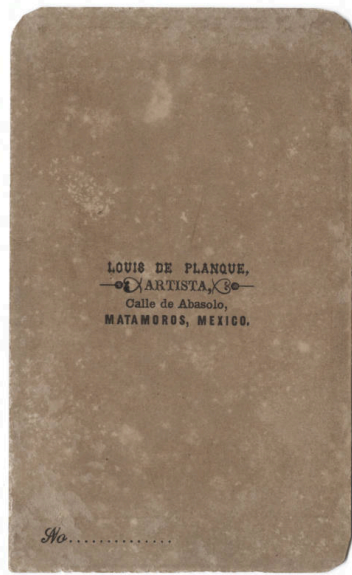
Austrian Soldiers, known as *Jaeger*, serving Emperor Maximilian in Matamoros, c. 1865. The “Civil War” in this region was a multinational conflict involving many rival armies.



A “municipal guard” in Matamoros. His clothing exemplifies the *charro* clothing that became popular in nineteenth-century Mexico.



Many of the photographs are ordinary studio portraits, such as this photograph of a woman in Matamoros around 1865-1867.



All photos are at the DeGolyer Library of Southern

**Methodist University.** For details, see the <https://www.smu.edu/libraries/degolyer/using/images> web page. For more information, contact [degolyer@smu.edu](mailto:degolyer@smu.edu).



[30]

## The End of the Civil War and Juneteenth

**This was one of the U.S. Army's final combat reports during the Civil War. This is an account of African American soldiers' actions at the battle of Palmito Ranch (or Palmetto Ranch in this source), often regarded as the final battle of the Civil War.**

Report of Lieut. Col. David Branson, Sixty-second U.S. Colored Troops. HDQRS. Sixty-Second REGT. U.S. COLORED INFANTRY

Brazos Santiago, Tex. May 18, 1865

Sir: I have the honor to submit the following detailed report of the operations of the troops under my command on the 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th of this month:

On the morning of the 11th, in pursuance of instructions from Colonel T. H. Barrett, commanding post, I reported at 4 a. m. at your headquarters at the landing with 250 men, properly officered, ready to cross to Point Isabel. A storm coming, and steamer intended to be used for ferry breaking her machinery, I returned, as ordered, to camp, and prepared to cross at Boca Chica, with 100 rounds of ammunition and seven days' rations (afterward five days' only, by Colonel Barrett's verbal order). Owing to a severe storm the crossing was with great difficulty effected by 9. 30 p. m., with 250 of the Sixty-second U. S. Colored Infantry, and 50 men of Second Texas Cavalry, not

mounted, under First Lieutenant Hancock and Second Lieutenant James. Two six-mule teams were taken to haul surplus rations, ammunition, &c.

At 2 a. m. of the 12th, after making a long circuitous march, we surrounded White's Ranch, where we expected to capture a rebel outpost of sixty-five men, horses, and cattle, but they had been gone a day or two. Owing to the exhausted condition of the men I could not reach Palmetto Ranch before daylight to surprise it, and therefore hid my command in a thicket and among weeds on the banks of the Rio Grande one mile and a half above White's Ranch, where we remained undiscovered until 8:30 a. m., when persons on the Mexican shore seeing us started to give the alarm to the rebels. At the same time soldiers of the Imperial Mexican Army were marching up that bank of the river. I immediately started for Palmetto Ranch, skirmishing most of the way with the enemy's cavalry, and drove them, at noon, from their camp, which had been occupied by about 190 men and horses, capturing 3 prisoners, 2 horses, and 4 beef-cattle, and their ten days' rations, just issued. Halted on the hill at Palmetto Ranch to rest and feed men and animals. While there at 3 p. m. a considerable force of the enemy appeared, and the position being indefensible, I fell back to White's Ranch for the night, skirmishing some on the way, and had one man of Second Texas Cavalry wounded. At the latter place sent a message to Colonel T. H. Barrett, commanding post Brazos Santiago, who joined me at daybreak of the 13th with 200 men of the Thirty-fourth Indiana Volunteer Infantry. I at once started forward by Colonel Barrett's order, and skirmishing soon commenced; continued all the morning. A halt was made at Palmetto Ranch and the remaining supplies of the enemy that had escaped the flames the day before were now burned. Moving two miles forward a sharp fight took place in the thicket on the river bank; one man severely wounded therein.

Afterward, by Colonel Barrett's order, fell back one mile and a half to a bluff on the river, about twelve miles from Boca Chica, to get dinner and rest for the night. Here at 4 p. m. a large force of the enemy's cavalry was observed endeavoring to gain our rear. I was ordered with the regiment to form line obliquely to the rear, faced toward them. As soon as formed,



and while awaiting expected cavalry charge, the enemy from a hill up the river (one mile and a half farther on) opened with artillery, doing no damage and creating no panic in my command, when I moved off, as ordered by Colonel Barrett, in retreat, furnishing 140 men for skirmishers, under Captains Miller and Coffin and Lieutenants Foster and Mead. They kept the enemy at a respectful distance at all times and did their duty in the best possible manner. Some temporary confusion was created by a portion of the Thirty-fourth Indiana breaking through my regiment at double-quick while I was marching in quick time, but order was immediately restored. The retreat was conducted by the right flank, for the reason that the nearest body of the enemy, 250 strong, with two pieces of artillery, were evidently trying to gain our rear and a favorable opportunity to charge, which was each time prevented by halting my command and coming to a front, thus facing him with the river at our backs. The force engaged with our skirmishers up the river was not immediately feared by the battalion, being so much farther distant and their fire, both of artillery and cavalry, very inaccurate. Owing to this same flanking force of the enemy our skirmish line could not be relieved without exposing the men and our colors to capture while rallying. Our losses of ordnance, seven Enfield rifles and accouterments of camp and garrison equipage light. Casualties, two men missing, supposed to be in the hands of the enemy.

The men did their duty nobly. Lieutenant Kantrener, my acting adjutant, was especially gallant, assisting in every part of the field. Captain Dubois and Lieutenants Stewart and Franzman stuck to their places and kept their men in order under very trying circumstances. First Sergeants Shipley, Company E, and Brown, Company D, proved themselves, as far as field duty is necessary, fit to command companies. We reached Boca Chica at 8 p. m. and crossed at 4 a. m. of the 14th, having at the time four men missing, two of whom afterward escaped from the enemy. The entire operation demonstrated the fact that the Negro soldiers can march; also that this regiment can keep order in the ranks and be depended upon under trying circumstances. Great skill in skirmishing was exhibited by Captain Miller and Lieutenant Foster and the men

under their command. The Texas cavalry, not yet mounted, officers and men, while under my command, behaved splendidly.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

DAVID BRANSON,

Lieutenant-Colonel, Commanding Sixty-second U. S. Colored Inftry.

United States. War Dept. The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies Official records of the Union and Confederate armies. Govt. Print. Off. Washington. Series I, 1-53; Series II, 1-8; Series III, 1-5; Series IV, 1-4 (1880 – 1901)

On June 19th 1865, U.S. Army General landed at the port of Galveston, taking possession of a final stronghold for the Confederate forces. He issued the Emancipation Proclamation there, an event commemorated as “Juneteenth.

**General Order No. 3:**

The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired labor. The freedmen are advised to remain quietly at their present homes and work for wages. They are informed that they will not be allowed to collect at military posts and that they will not be supported in idleness either there or elsewhere.

United States. War Dept. The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies Official records of the Union and Confederate armies. Govt. Print. Off. Washington. Series I, 1-53; Series II, 1-8; Series III, 1-5; Series IV, 1-4 (1880 – 1901)

WAR RECORDS  
COPIED  
1861-1865

Head Quarters District of Texas  
Galveston Texas June 19<sup>th</sup> 1865.

General Orders  
No. 3

The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This order is not absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property between former

masters and slaves and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired labor.

The freedmen are advised to remain quietly at their present homes, and work for wages. They are informed that they will not be allowed to collect at military posts, and that they will not be supported in idleness either there or elsewhere.

In order of Major General Granger.  
R. W. Emory,  
Major A. A. Tinsl.



This is where you can add appendices or other back matter.

This is where you can add appendices or other back matter.