

# PRIMARY SOURCES

## Uncharted Americana

1836

Documenting the Texas Revolution  
from San Luis Potosí



# PRIMARY SOURCES

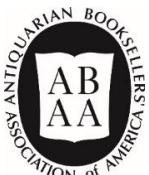
## Uncharted Americana

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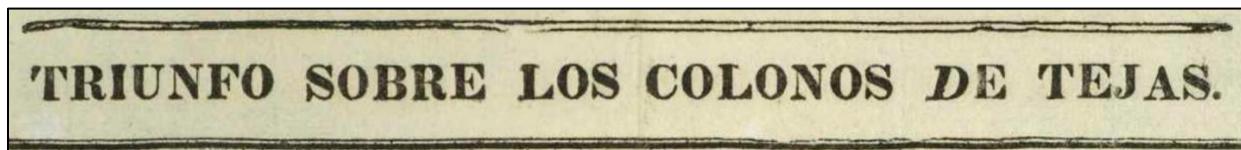


—Exmo Sr.—La victoria acompaña al ejército en este momento que son las ocho de la mañana acaba de conseguir la más completa y gloriosa que perpetuará su memoria.—Como anuncié á V. E. en 27 del próximo pasado al comunicarle la toma de esta Ciudad, esperaba la primera brigada de infantería para obrar desididamente sobre la fortaleza del Alamo; pero no pudiendo llegar todos los cuerpos de que se compone, lo verificaron doblando marchas, tres batallones, Zapadores, Aldama y Toluca, entre cuya fuerza, la de Matamoros, Jimenes y San Luis Potosí, pude escoger, espiando reclutas, 1400 infantes. Divididos estos en cuatro columnas y una reserva, según indica la orden general de ayer que en copia acompaña á V. E., se emprendió el asalto á las cinco de la mañana, experimentándose la más ostinada resistencia, de manera que duró la lucha más de hora y media, habiendo sido preciso emplear hasta la reserva.—El cuadro que presentaba esta lucha era extraordinario; los hombres pelearon individualmente, y cada uno se disputaba acciones de heroísmo: 21 piezas de artillería enemiga que se jugaban con toda despeza, el vivo fuego de fucilería que parecía iluminar el interior de la fortificación, y los fosos y murallas, no fueron obstáculos para los invadidos mexicanos; cumplieron como valientes, y son dignos de toda la consideración del Supremo Gobierno y de la gratitud de sus compatriotas, quedó, en fin, la fortaleza en nuestro poder con su artillería, parque, &c, y asentados entre sus fosos y arrinchamientos más de 600 cadáveres, todos extranjeros, y en las inmediaciones un crecido número que no se ha podido examinar, y que queriendo escapar de las balonetas de la infantería fueron á caer bajo los sables de la caballería, que hize situar en paraje á propósito. Puedo, pues, asegurar, que muy pocos habrían sido á noticiar el suceso á sus compañeros.—Entre dichos cadáveres se encuentran el del primero y segundo jefe de los enemigos Bowi y Travis, coronel que se titulaban, el de igual graduación Crocket, y todos los demás jefes y oficiales que portaban despachos de la convención. Por nuestra parte, ha habido como 70 muertos y 300 heridos, contándose entre unos y otros 2 jefes

y 23 oficiales, cuya perdida la nuel Fernandez Castrillon.—El batallón activo de Toluca, excepto la compañía de granaderos, compondrá esta segunda columna, y las tres restantes compañías de fusileros del activo de San Luis.—La tercera la mandara el Sr coronel D. José María Romero, y en su defecto el Sr. coronel D. Mariano Salas.—Las compañías de fusileros, en toda su fuerza, de los batallones permanentes Matamoros y Jimenes, compondrán esta columna.—La cuarta, la mandará el Sr coronel D. Juan Morales, y en su defecto el Sr coronel D. José Miñón.—La compondrá, las compañías de cazadores de los batallones permanentes Matamoros y Jimenes, y activo de San Luis.—Los lugares por donde deben atacar dichas columnas, las designará el General en Gefe oportunamente, y entonces recibirán los jefes sus instrucciones.—La reserva la compondrá el batallón de Zapadores y las cinco compañías de granaderos de los batallones permanentes Matamoros Jimenes y Aldama y las de los Activos de Toluca y San Luis.—Esta reserva será mandada por el mismo general en jefe en el momento del ataque; pero la reunión de estas fuerzas la verificará el Sr. Coronel D. Agustín Amat, á cuyas órdenes quedarán desde esta tarde, para conducirlas á donde también se le designará.—La primera columna llevará diez escalas, dos barretas y dos hachas, igual número la segunda, seis la tercera y dos la cuarta.—Los individuos que conduzcan las escalas, pondrán el fusil á la espalda, para que enteramente se ocupen de situarlas donde fuesen necesarias.—Las compañías de granaderos y cazadores, municionadas á seis paradas por plaza, y á cuatro las de fusileros, y dos piedras de reserva.—Estos no llevarán capotes, frazadas ni cosa alguna que les impida maniobrar con rapidez, y en el dia quedarán todos los morreones con borbiquejos, de lo que cuidarán mucho los comandantes de los cuerpos, así como que vaya la tropa calzada con zapato ó cacle. Las tropas que deben componer la columna de ataque, se acostarán á dormir á la oración de la noche, pues que á las doce de ella ha de empezar hacer sus movimientos.—Los reclutas que no estén bien espertos, quedarán en los cuarteles.—El armamento deberá ir en el mejor estado, particularmente las

## 1836: Documenting the Texas Revolution from San Luis Potosí

On January 2, 1836, when President and General of the Mexican Army Antonio López de Santa Anna marched north to confront the burgeoning Texas rebellion, few cities in Mexico were more invested in the outcome, both literally and figuratively, than San Luis Potosí. Not only was it Santa Anna's staging ground--the place where he would launch his invasion of Texas--but it was here that he had gathered, equipped, and organized his force of more than 6000 troops. What was more, he had raised funds by coercing its town council to offer him a 10,000-peso loan, then negotiated private loans of 400,000 pesos from two of its leading citizens. Thus it is little surprise that San Luis followed the unfolding events in Texas so closely, and that for the duration of the conflict its only contemporary newspaper, the weekly *La Opinion, periodico oficial del gobierno superior de San Luis Potosí*, covered all aspects of the war and its aftermath.



Here we are pleased to offer this remarkable record of the revolution, an almost unbroken run of *La Opinion* for the entire year of 1836, perhaps the most significant twelve months in Texas history. Spanning from January 1 through December 15, including 49 issues and 6 extras--many of which are unique--this is the most extensive known run of *La Opinion* for 1836, lacking only six issues. And since the lone contemporary paper published in Texas, the *Telegraph and Texas Register*, did not operate from March 24 to August 2, rare Mexican newspapers such as *La Opinion* are essential primary sources for documenting these crucial months of the war. **We have located only six institutions holding any copies of this title, and we trace no comparable run of any other 1836 Mexican newspaper ever offered in the history of the trade.**

### PRELUDE AT GONZALES

The first American citizen granted permission to settle a colony in Texas was Connecticut native Moses Austin, whose son Stephen would later come to be known as the Father of Texas. In 1820, Moses traveled from St. Louis--where both his lead mine and bank had failed--to the frontier post of San Antonio, where he convinced the Spanish Crown to reinstate the *empresario* system in eastern Tejas, then a sparsely populated part of New Spain. Under this framework, an *empresario* was an individual given the right to settle on land in exchange for recruiting colonists and providing for the local defense. Moses returned to Missouri to recruit 300 families, but died of pneumonia in June 1821 before seeing his scheme to completion. Prior to his death, he passed his *empresarial* title to Stephen, who having few opportunities in Missouri himself, traveled to San Antonio to take up his father's grant. Austin learned along the trip that Mexico had declared its independence from Spain, that Tejas had become part of the new Mexican state of Coahuila y Tejas, and that the new Mexican state refused to recognize his title. Austin eventually regained the *empresario* and began to advertise for colonists in New Orleans newspapers. Not until 1825 would he successfully settle the required 300 families in his Austin Colony, but by 1830 another 25,000 had joined these Old Three Hundred across the sprawling territory. Most of Austin's settlers had immigrated from the

American South, bringing with them the institution of slavery despite strong opposition from the new Mexican government. The inevitable flash point came in 1835.

For most of the decade, Austin had worked to maintain a fragile peace between the Mexican state and his Texas colonists, who chafed under the rule of the First Republic and its string of failed governments. In January 1834, with the mistaken belief that Austin was pressing for independence and stirring his colonists to rebellion, government authorities had him arrested in Saltillo and taken to Mexico City, where he would remain in prison or under house arrest until August 1835. Shortly after Austin's arrest, former president and military general Antonio López de Santa Anna staged a coup that overthrew the First Mexican Republic, replacing it and its federalist Constitution of 1824 with the conservative Centralist Republic of Mexico. Choosing to rule from behind the scenes, he had his ally and fellow soldier-politician Miguel Barragán installed as interim president in January 1835. During the next several months, federalist rebellions and separatist movements would break out across eastern and northern Mexico, including in Yucatan, Tabasco, Zacatecas, and Coahila y Tejas. For Austin's colonists, the end of the federalist system was troubling enough, but Coahila's new state constitution also promised an immediate end to slavery.

On October 2, a detachment of Mexican soldiers marched on Gonzales, Texas, to reclaim a cannon loaned to its colonists four years earlier to assist in their defense against Comanche Indian raids. As word spread, more than 140 members of the Texas militia gathered to resist. Shots were exchanged throughout the night and into the following day, resulting in the deaths of two Mexican soldiers. Outgunned and outnumbered, the government troops eventually withdrew--without the cannon--to San Antonio de Béxar, about 70 miles to the west. Although the skirmish was of little practical significance, its symbolic power can hardly be overstated. As Austin himself would write just two days later, "War is declared against military despotism. Public opinion has proclaimed it with one united voice. The campaign has opened" (in Paddock 1922: 122). After receiving news of the fight at Gonzales, the brother-in-law of Santa Anna, General Martín Perfecto de Cos, moved with 500 troops from Goliad to San Antonio. Austin followed with his militia, and on October 11 laid siege to Cos and his forces there. Meanwhile, colonists from across Texas met at San Felipe de Austin to form a political gathering, known as the Consultation, charged with organizing a new government. Sam Houston was appointed commander of the Texian Army, while Henry Smith was elected governor. Over the objections of the pro-independence Smith, the delegates voted to remain a part of Mexico, but only under the 1824 Constitution. The Texians' siege at Béxar held until December 9, when Cos and his men surrendered; Austin let them withdraw on condition that they not further oppose the Constitution. Following Cos's retreat, there was not a single Mexican garrison left in Texas, leading many colonists to think the war was over.

Santa Anna thought differently. Having taken on dictatorial powers with the overthrow of the 1824 Constitution, he had begun styling himself the Napoleon of the West, and having nothing but contempt for the rebels, he resolved to personally deliver a punishing blow. He stepped down as president and assumed command of the army, leaving Mexico City on November 28 for San Luis Potosí. Here he gathered more than 6000 troops and prepared to march them north, in the dead of winter, across 800 miles of the Chihuahuan desert to Béxar. On December 30, only a week before he departed from San Luis, his defense minister--Jose María Tornel--issued a proclamation from Mexico City that all foreigners fighting on behalf of Texas would be treated as pirates and shown no quarter if apprehended: "extranjeros que desembarcaran en algún puerto de la República



Issues of *La Opinion*, January-March 1836

# SUPLEMENTO al Núm. 124 de la Opinion.

## TRIUNFO SOBRE LOS COLONOS DE TEJAS.

SAN LUIS POTOSI MARZO 10 DE 1836.

**P**or extraordinario llegado anoche del Ejército de operaciones se han recibido las noticias siguientes.

### COPIA DE CARTA PARTICULAR.

San Patricio Febrero 27 de 1836.

Sr. General D. Francisco Vital Fernandez.

**C**ompañero muy querido.—Despues de largas jornadas hechas dia y de noche y entre un fuerte norte, que aun nos molesta, logré atacar aquí á los enemigos, cuyo resultado verá V. por el parte que doy á nuestro general en gafe y que en copia le acompañó. Hágame V. favor de ponerlo en conocimiento del supremo Gobierno. Yo no puedo escribir mas por que estoy hecho mil pedazos.

Sin mas lugar se repite su compañero que lo ama.—*José Urrea.*

P. D.—Tambien les cogí la bandera.

### PARTE OFICIAL.

*Ejército de operaciones.—División sobre Goliad.*—Ecsmo Sr.—Por las noticias que tube despues de mi salida de Matamoros entendí que los Colonos sublevados que se hallaban en este punto, se ocupaban de reunir caballada para conducirla á Goliad; con el objeto de hacer sus correrías. Hice un esfuerzo, vencí todas las dificultades y forzando tres dias y noches la marcha logré llegar hoy al amanecer á esta Villa, con solo cien hombres de la caballería; ataque al enemigo que se defendía con firmeza en las casas que le servían de Cuartel, pero en ellas mismas quedaron diez y seis muertos, y veinte un prisioneros incluyos tres heridos; y entre unos y otros variés oficiales, así como entre los segundos se hallan cinco mexicanos. Quedaron en mi poder las armas y cosa de cien caballos.

Tengo el gusto de poner en conocimiento de V. E. este triunfo de las armas de la Nación que aunque pequeño ha hecho conocer á nuestros enemigos y despreciables enemigos el valor y desicion de los soldados mexicanos, pues como leones se arrojaron sobre sus fueros y en un momento los despedazaron sin que haya escapado ninguno de los que en aquel acto se hayan en la Villa, segun los avisos que se me

han dado.

Tengo sin embargo el sentimiento de que me mataron á un valiente dragón y me hirieron á un sargento y tres dragones.

Ahora me ocupo en buscar al Dr. Grant que parece se halla con 50 rifl-ros y no se que numero de mexicanos por las inmediaciones de Mier segun los informes que he tenido.

Mas despacio daré á V. E. un parte circunstanciado, concluyendo por ahora con manifestarle que todos los individuos que componen esta division arden en entusiasmo por el sostén de los sagrados derechos de la Nación.

Me es muy grato repetir á V. E. las seguridades de mi respeto y aprecio.

Dios y libertad. Villa de San Patricio, Febrero 27 de 1836.—*José Urrea.*—Exmo Sr. Presidente D. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, General en Gefe del Ejército de operaciones.

Es copia.—*Urrea.*

Apenas se presentan las tropas Mejicanas al frente de los colonos de Tejas, cuando el triunfo es seguro sobre ellos. Vedlos, Potosinos atacados dentro de los mismos Pueblos que intentan robar á la República Mejicana: vedlos, cobardes en sus propias trincheras fugarse vergonzosamente ó ceder á los golpes del soldado de la Patria, que pelea por orgullo, por deber, por el decoro de una causa toda nacional.— Esos valientes que ameaazaban con rifles y simpatías á la misma Capital de la República, que se creían en los delirios de su imaginacion con recursos para emprender la conquista de Méjico, ceden á la vista de las armas nacionales. Las operaciones militares seguirán adelante y el éxito ya se anuncia por lo que consiguen secciones tan cortas del Ejército. Acaso hay Mejicanos que formando opinion con los colonos vean los triunfos de la Patria con sentimiento. ¡Ja! felices! Borre ella su nombre del catalogo de sus hijos, y colóquese en el de los infames y traidores. Nuestras divisiones interiores, nuestros mutuos resentimientos jamás autorizarán una causa que destruye el decoro y los intereses nacionales. Elegid. Enemigos de la administracion presente, otra arma menos infame para combatir la, que el sostén de la guerra de Tejas: elegid causa que os degrade menos, que os aleje la nota de traidores públicos, y no condene vuestro nombre, y memoria al odio y la execracion nacional.— E.E.

Imprenta del Gobierno, á cargo del Ciudadano José María Infante.

o penetraran en ella, armados y con objeto de atacar nuestro territorio, serán tratados y castigados como piratas.” Meant to dampen the Texian’s fervor, the now infamous Tornel Decree was instead a fuel that turned the spark at Gonzales into the conflagration at San Jacinto.

## BÉXAR AND THE ALAMO

Santa Anna led his army out of San Luis Potosí on January 2. After a grueling march of more than six weeks, during which the Mexican force--now numbering perhaps 8000 men--faced brutal winter storms and half-rations, they finally began crossing the Rio Grande into South Texas by February 15. Eight days later, the first of Santa Anna’s troops reached Béxar and discovered the Texian rebels barricaded behind the walls of its old Alamo mission, which with its adjoining fortified compound sprawled across three acres. In the weeks since General Cos had relinquished Béxar to Austin’s militia, the Texans had labored steadily to improve the compound’s ramshackle defenses, including building a catwalk along the walls. Even so, the Alamo was only intended to withstand short attacks from Native American raids, not an assault by a large force equipped with artillery. Moreover, the Texans barely numbered 250 men, and were perhaps as few as 180, far from what was needed to adequately defend the Alamo’s 1300-foot perimeter.

Back in early January, the Alamo’s acting commander, Col. James Neill, had written to the provisional government and to Sam Houston seeking additional men and supplies. Houston, who was struggling to organize the Texian Army, could spare little of either, but instead sent Col. James Bowie and 30 men to retrieve the Alamo’s 20 cannon--all but one of which were left behind by Cos--and to destroy the complex to prevent its falling back into Mexican hands. Soon after arriving at Béxar, however, Bowie agreed with Neill that defending the old fort was essential to the Texian cause and refused his order from Houston to destroy it. On February 11, Neill had left the fort to recruit defenders from the surrounding countryside, leaving 26-year-old Lt. Col. William Travis to command in his stead. The other defenders voted to put the older and more experienced Bowie in charge, such that the two men ultimately shared command of the fort. During the second week of February, morale was bolstered by the arrival of former congressman David Crockett, then one of the most famous men in America. An anti-Jacksonian who had just lost his bid for reelection to a candidate of the Jacksonian machine, he had made his way from Tennessee to San Antonio de Béxar with the aim of rekindling both his personal and political fortunes. Offered a commission at once (with his age and military experience he would have outranked any man at the Alamo), he offered that he would be honored to serve instead as a simple private. Despite pleas from Travis and Bowie, no more than a trickle of reinforcements would arrive in time to help them hold the old garrison. The Alamo’s defenders were on their own.

The Texans realized neither how rapidly Santa Anna was approaching nor the size of his force until February 23, when Mexican troops were nearly within sight of the garrison. Santa Anna immediately laid in a siege and began bombarding the Alamo with long guns and howitzers placed well beyond the reach of Texian volleys. Things were progressing well for Santa Anna’s campaign beyond his own siege, as well. At San Patricio, halfway between Béxar and Matamoros, General José Urrea twice launched devastating surprise attacks on a Texian force under Dr. James Grant and Frank Johnson that was charging south in an ill-advised foray to take Matamoros (a strategy opposed by Sam Houston himself). Urrea surprised Johnson’s half of the force, about 40 men, as they slept at San Patricio on February 27, killing 16 and taking 21 captive, though Johnson escaped

toward Refugio. Then three days later Urrea caught Grant's detachment as they were returning to San Patricio, killing 40--including Grant--and taking six more as prisoners, as well as all of their munitions, supplies, and horses. Urrea sent notice of his victories to Santa Anna and asked what he should do with his prisoners. Foreshadowing what was to come, the commander replied that Tornel's decree and thus Mexican law was clear: there were to be no prisoners, they would make an example of the Texans for other would-be rebels. Urrea should kill them all.

Urrea's lightning strikes spurred Santa Anna to make his move against the Alamo. By the time he learned of the Mexican victories at San Patricio, the Texian defenses at Béxar had been under constant bombardment for nearly ten days, and many of his closest officers believed that the collapse of the old fort's walls was imminent. What was more, the siege had cut the garrison off from any hope of fresh supplies or reinforcements. With a bit more patience, there would be no need to launch a full assault; they could wait instead for the rebels' inevitable surrender. But Santa Anna perceived Urrea's bold strokes as a threat to his personal role as vanquisher-in-chief. For that he needed not an uninspiring surrender but glorious victory in battle. He would take the Alamo by force, even if doing so came with the cost of needless casualties among his own ranks.

On the night of March 4, Santa Anna held a council of war with his staff where he declared his intention to end the siege and storm the fort. Several officers meekly questioned the timing of this shift in strategy, but opposition was short lived. Soldiers received their orders the following afternoon: at four o'clock the next morning, March 6, the army would make its move. Inside the Alamo, some of the Texans were pressing Travis to seek terms of surrender. Bowie, his nominal co-commander, had fallen ill a few days earlier and was confined to his bed with raging fever and delirium, leaving Travis to make such decisions alone. In his earlier letters to Sam Houston and the provisional government he had famously proclaimed "Victory or Death!," so it is unlikely that the young officer would have seriously considered the possibility of surrender. Moreover, he knew well enough that Santa Anna would surely reject any terms that spared their lives. So instead he placed his hope in the possibility that reinforcements might still arrive in time, for if not, they had little chance of holding back a full assault. The Texans slept as Santa Anna's four columns slipped silently into their positions on each side of the fort--east, west, north, and south. Then a bugle call sounded at dawn, and with roars of "Viva Santa Anna! Viva Mexico!" the Mexican army launched itself against the garrison and its unsuspecting sentries.

It should have been a massacre, a total rout. That it was something more is testament to the Texans' remarkable tenacity and fervor in the face of their own destruction. Santa Anna hurled hundreds of his poorly trained, forced conscripts against the battlements of the Alamo, and scores were cut down by its cannon and artillery, which the quickly roused colonists had leapt to at the sound of that first bugle blast. But the numbers were overwhelming--at least 2000 Mexican troops against what was probably fewer than 200 defenders. In less than an hour the attackers breached the outer walls. What followed was thirty minutes of almost unimaginable hand-to-hand combat from building to building, room to room, all the way to the doors of the mission chapel itself--that part of the Alamo that still maintains an iconic place in Texas history. Inside, the last defenders were cut down, and Santa Anna could claim his victory. Travis had died early in the melee, killed instantly by a shot to the head during fierce fighting on the northern parapet. Bowie died in his bed, though accounts vary as to whether he was capable of defending himself. The circumstances of Crockett's death have long been the subject of debate. Some reports claim that he was killed in



Issues of *La Opinion*, April-June 1836

Núm. 128.

# LA OPINION PERIODICO OFICIAL

DEL GOBIERNO SUPERIOR DEL DEPARTAMENTO

DE SAN LUIS POTOSI

Viernes 1º de Abril de 1836

Este periodico, destinado principalmente para las Autoridades y empleados del Departamento, saldra los Viernes de cada semana, se reciben suscripciones en la Capital, en la Imprenta del mismo, a razón de cuatro reales por mes, y fuera en las Administraciones de rentas a razón de seis reales de peso.—Las personas que gustan favoritamente con sus producciones se servirán dirigirlos a los redactores de la opinión.

## DEPARTAMENTO DE TEJAS.

### Ejército de Operaciones.

**E**l General en Jefe del ejército de operaciones de la República Mexicana, a los habitantes de Tejas.

¡CIUDADANOS! Las causas que han conducido á esta frontera á una parte del Ejército Mexicano, no os son desconocidas: atrevidos aventureros protegidos malignamente por habitantes de la república vecina, osaron invadir nuestro territorio para repartirse los肥iles terrenos que componen el dilatado Departamento de Tejas, y amenazaban llegar hasta la Capital de la República: era necesario contener y castigar tanma osadía, y ya en S. Patricio, y Lipaulttan, y esta Ciudad se han presentado ejemplares consiguientes á tanta temeridad.

No quisiera haber encontrado entre los nombres de tales aventureros, los de algunos colonos á quienes se les habían dispensado repetidos beneficios, sin que tuvieran motivo alguno de queja contra el gobierno de su patria adoptiva: estos ingratos necesariamente deberán tambien sufrir el condigno castigo que demanda la justicia, para satisfacer á la vindicta pública. Mas si esto es debido, no lo es menos proteger al inocente: así que los habitantes de este suelo, sean del origen que fueren, que no se hayaren inanodados en tan inicua rebelión, serán respetados en sus personas y propiedades, presentándose dentro de ocho días después de llegadas las tropas á sus establecimientos, para justificar su

conducta, y recibir el documento que asegure á cada uno en el gabinete que pertenece.

!Bajareños! Regresad á vuestros hogares, y ocupaos de vuestros quehaceres domésticos: vuestros ciudades, y la fortaleza del Alamo son ya guarneidas por el Ejército de la R. Pública con puesto de vuestros compatriotas, y estad seguros que ninguna reunión de extranjeros volverá á interrumpir vuestro reposo, ni atacar vuestra existencia y propiedades el Gobierno Supremo os ha tomado bajo su protección, y velará por vuestro bien.

¡Habitantes de Tejas! Os he manifestado las órdenes que viene á practicar el ejército de operaciones que tengo el honor de mandar, y en tal concepto, nada tienen los buenos que temer: cumplid siempre con los deberes de Ciudadanos Mexicanos, y esperad la protección y beneficio de las leyes, seguros de que jamas tendrás motivos de arrepentimiento, como os lo promete, á nombre de los Supremos poderes de la Nación, vuestro amigo. Cuartel general de B. Jar Marzo 7 de 1836.—Antonio López de Santa Anna.

## GOBIERNO GENERAL.

**S**ecretaria de Justicia y Negocios Eclesiásticos.—Circular. Exmo. Sr.—Con el fin de evitar contestaciones, demoras y embarracos que suelen ocurrir al verificar las ejecuciones de justicia de los reos paisanos juzgados por la jurisdicción militar, conforme á la ley de 29 de octubre del año proximo pasado, ha tenido a bien

resolver el Exmo Sr. Presidente interino por punto general—1º.

Que cuando algun reo de aquella clase se consigne á la jurisdicción ordinaria, para la ejecución de la pena capital, con arreglo á la real orden de 30 de Junio de 1815, deberá disponer el juez respectivo de primera instancia por vía de auxilio, todo lo necesario para llevar á efecto la sentencia, poniéndose de acuerdo con la autoridad política para las providencias de policía y seguridad que se crean convenientes; y que esta ultima obre sola en los casos en que las ejecuciones se hayan de hacer por los Fiscales militares en los reos de su fuero—2º. Que en las Ciudades Pueblos y lugares donde hubiere varios Jueces de primera instancia se observe entre ellos un riguroso turno de antigüedad para encargarse de tales actos.—3º. Que á fin de evitar que estos espectáculos se conviertan en paseo ó diversion pública, distrayendo á los concurrentes por mucho tiempo de sus ocupaciones y trabajos, se procuren disponer las ejecuciones lo mas temprano posible, de modo que queden practicadas á las nueve de la mañana.—Y tengo el honor de decirlo á V. E. de suprema orden para su inteligencia y efectos correspondientes, acompañando copia de la real orden que se cita.

Dios y libertad Mexico 22 de Marzo de 1836.—José de Iuribe.—Exmo Sr Gobernador del Departamento de San Luis Potosí.

SECRETARIA DE GUERRA  
Y MARINA SECCION CENTRAL  
MESA 1.<sup>a</sup>

Ejército de operaciones.

fighting between the chapel and a barracks; others claim that he was captured with several others near the end of the assault and that Santa Anna stood watching as Mexican soldiers cut him down with their swords. What is known with near certainty is that there were no survivors among the Texans. Yet Santa Anna's direct attack on the Alamo cost him dearly--nearly 600 soldiers either dead or wounded. At the time such losses might have seemed sustainable, and perhaps even worth the glory of having defeated the rebel colonists in such dramatic fashion. In little more than six weeks, though, they would play no small part in deciding Santa Anna's own fate.

## TEXIAN INDEPENDENCE AND THE GOLIAD CAMPAIGN

While the Alamo was still under Santa Anna's siege, the Convention of 1836 was getting underway about 175 miles to the east at Washington-on-the-Brazos. The provisional government had called for a convention the previous December--over the veto of then-Governor Smith--and delegates were elected on February 1. They began to arrive at Washington a month later, on March 1, and would remain in session until early in the morning of March 17. On the second day of the convention, the delegates approved with no debate the Texas Declaration of Independence, drafted only the previous day by George Childress and a committee of five. Based primarily on the works of John Locke and Thomas Jefferson, it formally established the Republic of Texas (though a full year would pass until any other nation recognized the Republic, when the United States finally did so on March 3, 1837). After adopting the Declaration, convention delegates immediately set to work on a constitution. But as this document was nearing completion, on March 15, news arrived of the Alamo's complete destruction. The delegates managed to work through all of the next day and into the night, adopting the Constitution of the Republic of Texas on March 16 and electing David G. Burnet as *ad interim* president. Then on the morning of March 17, on learning that Santa Anna's forces were only 60 miles away, they hastily adjourned and fled, with Burnet stuffing the signed copy of the Declaration into his saddlebags.

After surprising the detachments of Johnson and Grant at San Patricio, Urrea had marched his troops north across open prairie toward Goliad and its Fort Defiance, manned by a garrison of more than 400 Texans under command of planter, slave-trader, and West Point dropout Col. James Fannin. The troops at Goliad had entered the war with high confidence: the fort was strong, they were well-supplied with food, arms, and munitions, and the arrival of a large party of Americans on February 12 had bolstered their numbers to what seemed a formidable size. Near the end of the month, Fannin had prepared to leave Goliad with a force of 320 men and four pieces of artillery to reinforce Travis at the Alamo. Yet less than a quarter-mile from the gates, one of the ox-drawn wagons carrying the artillery broke down, then the crossing of the San Antonio River proved more challenging than the relief force had anticipated. They soon gave up the attempt and returned to Goliad. Morale within the garrison began a steep decline, along with a loss of confidence in the capabilities of its commander. In mid-March, Fannin dispatched a company of 28 men to evacuate colonists at Refugio, about 30 miles to the south. When Urrea's cavalry surrounded this group in Refugio's mission, Fannin sent 120 more. All of the troops of both parties were ultimately killed or captured, costing Fannin a quarter of his force. Shortly after, he received two letters from Sam Houston. The first reported the Alamo's fall; the other ordered him to abandon and destroy Fort Defiance and to retreat 25 miles east to Victoria, where Houston was regrouping the army. Not knowing what had happened at Refugio, Fannin resolved carry out the order soon as his missing troops returned. He waited a full week, long enough for Urrea's forces to draw near.

Finally, on March 19, the Texian troops at Goliad began their retreat toward Victoria. But rather than move rapidly--an urgent necessity given Urrea's far superior numbers--Fannin and his men departed with heavy cannons, hundreds of extra guns, and as much of their personal baggage as they could cart or carry. The going proved so slow that before noon the first morning they were compelled to leave most of their gear and equipment along the road. The column advanced toward the woods along Coleto Creek, and when Urrea's forces came into view, Fannin's officers pleaded that they make a sprint for the cover of the treeline. Fannin refused, ordering the company to draw into a hollow square instead, with the remaining artillery placed on each corner. The Texans held their own for much of the day, repulsing several Mexican charges, but Urrea's full army arrived and quickly surrounded their formation. During the night they ran out of water, whether to slack their thirst or cool their cannons, and in the morning when the Mexican artillery began to bombard their exposed position on the plain, Fannin sought to parley. Urrea made clear that he could accept nothing but an unconditional surrender, while Fannin seems to have understood that Urrea would persuade Santa Anna to spare the lives of his troops. In any event, the Battle of Coleto Creek, also known as Llano del Perdido, was nothing short of a disaster for Texas.

The Texian prisoners--more than 350 in all--were marched back and imprisoned inside the ruined Fort Defiance, and Urrea wrote a letter to Santa Anna appealing to his commander's sense of military honor. But Santa Anna was furious that Urrea had taken any prisoners at all, insisting that he should have left them dead on the battlefield. Referring to the Tornal Decree of December 30, he concluded that there could be no quarter. Urrea, knowing the likely outcome and seeking to keep the blood from his own hands, had already departed for Victoria, so that when it arrived on March 26, Santa Anna's order to execute every Texian fell to his replacement, Col. Jose Nicolas de la Portilla. The following day, Portilla carried out the command, marching his prisoners to the banks of the San Antonio River where they were shot at point-blank range. Fannin was the last to be killed. Having witnessed the slaughter of his men, he asked that he be shot in the chest--not in the head, that his possessions be sent to his family, and that he be given a Christian burial. Fannin was shot in the face and stripped of clothes and belongings, after which his body was tossed onto a pile with rest of the dead and burned. Of the men who had departed Fort Defiance under Fannin's command, barely more than two dozen are known to have survived.

## **SAN JACINTO AND ITS AFTERMATH**

After the Goliad debacle, the fate of an independent Texas lay almost entirely in the hands of Sam Houston. And no one knew better than Houston that his Texian Army--an organized force in name only--was woefully unprepared for a full-on confrontation with the unified Mexican troops under Santa Anna and Urrea. Despite the protests of his men and the insinuations of cowardice by Interim President Burnet and other members of the Texian government, Houston did everything he could to avoid battle. He retreated deeper into Texas, drawing the Mexican Army with him and lengthening Santa Anna's already fraying supply lines. For Santa Anna, on the other hand, a quick end to the war was essential. As president-general, any extended absence from the capitol offered his enemies there an opportunity to undermine his authority, while leaving the clean-up in Texas to Urrea meant seeing another return to Mexico with the laurels of victory. To complicate matters further, his own hand-picked interim president, Miguel Barragán, had died unexpectedly in Mexico City, leaving the General's political position vulnerable. So Santa Anna pushed on after Houston's ragtag outfit, driving east over more than 200 miles of rough ground.



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abonará á los comisionados exactores de esta Ciudad, por lo que se enterare á virtud de las notificaciones y ejecuciones que estos hicieren.

Décimanova. La correspondencia oficial reciproca entre el Administrador general y los cajerales, y la de estos con los recaudadores subalternos en asunto relativo á esta contribución, y á las de fincas rústicas y urbanas, será franca de porte, llevando en la parte superior de la cubierta, la nota de *servicio general*, conforme al artículo 5.º de la ley de 18 de Mayo de 1832.

Comunicalo á V. E., para su inteligencia y fines consiguientes.

Y para que llegue á noticia de todos y tenga su mas exacto cumplimiento, ordene se imprima, publique y circule, á quienes corresponda.

San Luis Potosí Agosto 4 de 1836.—Juan José Domínguez.—Manuel Lozano, Secretario.

#### GOBIERNO DEL DEPARTAMENTO.

**B**atallón primero Activo de San Luis Potosí.—Exmo. Sr. —La falta de correos en la campaña, y el haberme enfermado tan luego como llegué á este punto, me han privado la satisfacción de dirigir á V. E. mis comunicaciones, mas hoy que me encuentro un tanto restablecido lo verifico, suplicandole se sírva disimular esta falta que solo pudo ser originada por los motivos espuestos.

El Batallón que tengo el honor de mandar, y pertenece al Departamento de V. E. se ha sancionado en la expedición de Tejas

con el valor y entusiasmo propio del soldado mexicano; los partes que los Generales á cuyas inmediatas órdenes hemos servido han dirigido al Supremo Gobierno, y la voz general de este mismo ejército, dan una idea clara de su

comportamiento; el desde luego al hacerlos acreedores á toda recomendación, los hace también dignos de la consideración de V. E., con tal motivo es adjunta la relación de los muertos y heridos que ha tenido el cuerpo, para que si fuere del alto agrado de V. E. se digne recomendar las familias de los valientes que dieron sus vidas en defensa de su patria, y la atención de los que aun se hallan heridos y enfermos.

Al hacer á V. E. esta manifestación, tengo el placer de reiterar las consideraciones de mi distinguido aprecio, lo mismo que las protestas de mi subordinación y respeto.

Dios y libertad. Matamoros á 29 de Julio de 1836.—Juan Morelos.—Exmo. Sr. Gobernador del Departamento de San Luis Potosí.

### BATALLÓN ACTIVO DE SAN LUIS.

Relacion de los muertos y heridos de tropa que ha tenido este cuerpo en las acciones que se refieren.

COMPANIAS.	CLACES.	ASALTO DEL ALAMO.	MUERTOS.	HERIDOS.
Agregado de Milicia civ.º	Teniente . . .	D. Irineo Guerrero. . . . .	Muerto. "	"
Plana Mayor . . . . .	Sub-ayudante . . .	D. Antonio Carricarte. . . . .	1	"
	Sargento 1.º v.º			
	Gastador. . . . .	Antonio Obiedo. . . . .	"	1
Granaderos . . . . .	Granaderos . . . . .	Felipe Santiago. . . . .	"	1
		Victoriano Perez. . . . .	1	"
	Sargento 2.º . . .	Antonio Velasquez. . . . .	1	"
	Otro iden. . . . .	Manuel Vargas. . . . .	1	"
	Cavo. . . . .	Macdonio Rocha. . . . .	"	1
	Soldados. . . . .	Secundino Alvares. . . . .	1	"
		Juan Isidoro Cruz. . . . .	"	1
		José María Avila. . . . .	"	1
		Paulin Moralez. . . . .	"	1
		Valentin Peña. . . . .	"	1
		Nepomuceno Hernandez. . . . .	"	1
		Francisco Loredo. . . . .	"	1
		Lorenzo Martinez. . . . .	"	1
		Justo Castillo. . . . .	"	1
		Justo Martinez. . . . .	1	"
		Ignacio Nuñez. . . . .	1	"
		Francisco Rivera. . . . .	"	1
		Leonardo Gómez. . . . .	1	"
		Serafin Puga. . . . .	1	"
		José de los Santos Torres. .	"	1
		Esteban Reyes. . . . .	"	1
		Francisco Martinez. . . . .	"	1
		Homobono Zapata. . . . .	"	1
		Candelario Ramirez. . . . .	"	1
		Onofre Carrales. . . . .	"	1
		Vital Arias. . . . .	"	1
		Tiburcio Quevedo. . . . .	"	1
	Cabo. . . . .	Andres Arteaga. . . . .	1	"
	Soldados. . . . .	Cornelio Rosalio. . . . .	1	"
		Santa Anna Moctezuma. .	"	1
		José María Martinez. 2.º	"	1
		Vicente Galvan. . . . .	"	1

COMPANIAS.	CLASES.	NOMBRES.	MUERTOS.	HERIDOS.
Tercera. . . . .		Anastacio Vega. . . . .	"	1
		Francisco Martinez. . . . .	"	1
		Jose Antonio Martinez. . . . .	"	1
		Alvino Vasquez. . . . .	"	1
		Luciano Cruz. . . . .	"	1
		Epitacio Hernandez. . . . .	"	1
	Soldados. . . . .	Francisco Ordaz. . . . .	1	"
Cuarta. . . . .		Manuel Chavez. . . . .	"	1
		Calisto Castro. . . . .	"	1
		Monico Lara. . . . .	"	1
	Cazadores. . . . .	German Sanchez. . . . .	1	"
Casadores. . . . .		Victoriano Tenorio. . . . .	1	"
		Tieodoro Delgadillo. . . . .	1	"
		Mariano Hernandez. . . . .	1	"
		<i>Total. . . . .</i>	16	32
<b>ACCION DEL LLANO DEL PERDIDO.</b>				
Plana Mayor. . . . .	Cabo. . . . .	Antonio Urtado. . . . .	"	1
	Gastador. . . . .	Pablo Garcia. . . . .	1	"
	Granaderos. . . . .	German Irala. . . . .	"	1
		Carmelio Chavez. . . . .	"	1
		Papias Sabedra. . . . .	"	1
		Guadalupe Reyes. . . . .	"	1
		Juan Banda. . . . .	"	1
		Guadalupe Salazar. . . . .	"	1
		Teodocio Hernandez. . . . .	"	1
Granaderos. . . . .		Trinidad Gonzales. . . . .	"	1
		Cresencio Pinal. . . . .	"	1
		German Medina. . . . .	"	1
		Miguel Martinez. . . . .	"	1
		Nepomuceno Machuca. . . . .	"	1
		Monico Oguina. . . . .	"	1
		Andres Perez. . . . .	1	"
	Cabo. . . . .	Carlos Garcia. . . . .	"	1
	Soldados. . . . .	Eleuterio Sedillo. . . . .	1	"
Primera. . . . .		Juan Carrales. . . . .	"	1
		Luis Trujillo. . . . .	"	1
		Luis Hernandez. . . . .	"	1
		Patricio Lopez. . . . .	"	1
		Felix Moreno. . . . .	"	1
		Mateo Gamez. . . . .	"	1
		José Maria Medina. . . . .	"	1
	Capitan. . . . .	D. Nicolas. Villalobos. . . . .	"	herido. . . . .
	Cazadores. . . . .	Francisco Garcia. 1.º. . . . .	"	1
Casadores. . . . .		Timoteo Mares. . . . .	"	1
		Filomeno Obiedo. . . . .	"	1
		Dionicio Cabrera. . . . .	"	1
		Victoriano Redondo. . . . .	"	1
		Anselmo Villalobos. . . . .	"	1
Agregado de Milicia Civica. . . . .	Teniente. . . . .	D. Luis Monzon. . . . .	"	herido. . . . .
		<i>Total. . . . .</i>	2	29

**EN LA OCUPACION DE BRAZORIA.**

Cuarta. . . . .	Soldado. . . . .	Eulogio Correa. . . . .	1	"
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**RESUMEN.**

Aasalto del Alamo. . . . .	16	32
Llano del Perdido. . . . .	2	29
Ocupacion de Brazoria. . . . .	1	00
<i>Suma total. . . . .</i>	19	61

Matamoros Julio 29 de 1836.—C. E. D. D. Anastacio Parrodi.—V.º B.º — Morales.

Then in April Santa Anna learned that members of the Texian government had abandoned Washington-on-the-Brazos for Harrisburg, now located within the limits of modern Houston. The general acted decisively, if rashly, on the news. Without conferring with his staff, he pulled nearly 750 seasoned troops from their units and shot off in haste toward Harrisburg on April 14, intending to take the rebellion's political leaders by surprise and bring the insurrection to its end. Arriving the next day, he found that word of his advance had preceded him by only a few hours; as Mexican forces watched, President Burnet escaped in a boat bound for Galveston Island, where the rest of the government had already retreated. For Santa Anna, this was merely an inconvenience, no more than a delay of the inevitable. With the Texian leaders having essentially imprisoned themselves on Galveston, all that remained was for him to destroy Houston's so-called army. Believing that Houston planned to join the other leaders offshore, Santa Anna burned Harrisburg and pushed on toward the ferry at Lynchburg Crossing. There he would cut off the retreat.

But Houston's force was moving toward Harrisburg, not the ferry at Lynchburg. Entering the still-smoldering town on April 18, they happened upon a Mexican courier carrying information on all Mexican troops in Texas, as well as plans on their future movements. Houston realized that for the first time his own forces, now perhaps 800 men, actually outnumbered those who had gone with Santa Anna in their failed pursuit of the Texian government. Seizing the moment, he extolled his troops, "Remember the Alamo! Remember Goliad!," and they sped toward Lynchburg. The Texans reached Lynch's Ferry first, on the morning of April 20, and made camp in an oak grove along the banks of Buffalo Bayou that concealed the size of the force. The Mexicans arrived some hours later, and against the recommendations of his staff, Santa Anna ordered his men to establish camp on an open plain near the San Jacinto River. Several skirmishes erupted during the day, but Houston held his main force in the trees, while Santa Anna pondered how to draw the Texans out onto the plain. Early the next morning, while Houston slept, General Cos--who had surrendered the Alamo to Austin six months earlier--reached the Mexican encampment with a contingent that instantly doubled the number of Mexican troops. Many of the Texans, watching from the treeline 500 yards away, were furious at Houston for not having attacked the day before. But Cos's men were inexperienced recruits who had marched 24 hours with no rest or food. Santa Anna believed that if the Texans had planned to attack, they would have done so in the morning. Since he had slept little the night before, having overseen the construction of a breastworks, he instructed Cos's men to stack their arms and nap, then did likewise himself.

At 3:30 in the afternoon, Houston ordered his men to form up. Only a short distance from the Mexican line, they moved forward without notice, protected from view by tall grass and a small hill between the opposing camps. At less than a quarter-mile, Houston--mounted atop a borrowed white stallion--ordered his cannon to open fire and his infantry to charge. Among the unsuspecting Mexicans, pandemonium ensued. It took less than 18 minutes for Santa Anna's forces to abandon their camp and take flight, although the killing would continue for hours. Houston tried to put an end to the slaughter, but the atrocities of the Alamo and Goliad were much too fresh in the minds of the Texans. By the end of the day, at least 650 Mexican soldiers were killed, another 200 were wounded, and 300 more were taken prisoner. Despite the overwhelming rout, the Texans' victory was due almost entirely to the element of surprise and had come against a fraction of the Mexican Army. The undefeated troops of General Urrea were charging toward San Jacinto, as was the bulk of the army under General Vicente Filisola--Santa Anna's second-in-command who to this point had managed logistics and supplies behind Santa Anna's advance forces. Badly outnumbered and



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blican con el fin de acarrear la ruina y la desgracia á los objetos de su encono. Por de contado no consiguen su objeto, y el vilipendiocae sobre sus autores con mayor fuerza. Presagiamos que tal será el resultado en el caso presente. Afortunadamente para la causa de Tejas, la condición de sus asuntos es demasiado bien conocida de la mayoría de nuestros ciudadanos para que esta publicación produzca el efecto con que se hizo; pero no tenemos duda de que causará una sensación desfavorable por algún tiempo en el Oeste, y que hará vacilar á muchos que se han interesado profundamente en la causa de Tejas, y que se preparaban á prestarle sus auxilios. A todos estos individuos les advertiremos que no se fien de los difamadores. Estas no son otra cosa que falsas representaciones de hombres cuyos planes interesados han quedado frustrados, y que en la mayor parte se hacen sin ningún conocimiento del verdadero estado de los negocios sobre que escriben. Decimos sin ningun *comienzo*, por habérsenos dado informes exactos de que ni uno solo de esta compañía de emigrados estuvo jamás cerca del ejército, y por consiguiente no pudieron tener mas fundamentos que las concepciones de su imaginacion fértil para lo que dicen con relación á él. Ellos en realidad, sabian menos acerca del esado del ejército por la distancia á que se hallaban y el modo indirecto de comunicación, que lo que nosotros sabemos en Nueva Orleans.

— El mayor Fergusson, secretario del ejecutivo de Tejas, llegó á esta ciudad anteayer, en la goleta Coronel Fanning, procedente de Velasco.

— París agosto 8.— Dice el *Times*, que el debate de la cámara de los comunes dà alguna luz sobre el asunto de Tejas, y los motivos de los habitantes de aquel país para querer separarse de México. Los Tejanos desean perpetuar la anomalia social garantizada por la *república modelo* en sus leyes, y esta no quiere otra cosa sino añadir Tejas á sus demás estados. La respuesta de Lord Palmerston no es satisfactoria. Si Inglaterra intenta intervenir é impedir la extención del comercio de esclavos, debia hacerlo de una vez. Ahora es solo cuando el influjo de aquel país y de otras potencias europeas puede servir de algo. Cuan-

do Tejas pertenezca á los Estados Unidos ya será demaciado tarde.

Comercial Bulletin  
Diario del Gobierno

MEXICO NOVIEMBRE 29 DE 1836.

**T**enemos la satisfaccion de exhibir al público, para su inteligencia y fines consiguientes, (como si dice en las comunicaciones oficiales) la oportuna protesta del presidente de la república, general D. Antonio Lopez de Santa-Anna, ofreciendo copiar tambien (si la podemos adquirir) la contestacion que tuvo por conveniente dar D G Burnet *Presidente de la república tejana!!!*

„Secretario particular del presidente de la república mexicana, general en jefe del ejército de operaciones.”

„Yo Antonio Lopez de Santa-Anna, presidente de la república de México y general en jefe del ejército de operaciones sobre Tejas, comparezco por medio de este documento oficial ante el gobierno interior del pueblo tejano, con el objeto de manifestar, que estoy resuelto á presentar al mundo civilizado la siguiente protesta.”

„Protesto contra la violacion de la fe empeñada en el convenio hecho entre mi y el gobierno de Tejas, firmado el dia 14 de Mayo ultimo, y que comenzó verbalmente con el general en jefe del ejército de Tejas, Samuel Houston, y T J Rusk, secretario de guerra, en el cual se ha estipulado lo siguiente.”

Protesto primero, por haber sido tratado mas bien como un criminal ordinario, que como un prisionero de guerra, siendo general de una nación respetable, aun despues de los principios de los convenios.”

2.º „Protesto contra el trato que recibo como prisionero de guerra, y tambien contra el insulto que ha recibido el general mexicano Adrián Woll, quien habia ido al campo tejano en calidad de parlamentario bajo la salvaguardia y palabra de honor del general Houston y con el consentimiento de los miembros del gabinete.”

3.º „Protesto contra la no ejecucion del cange de los prisioneros, estipulado en el 9.º ar-

tículo, por cuanto que hasta el presente ningun mexicano prisionero de guerra se ha puesto en libertad, á pesar de la que se ha dado á todos los tejanos que estaban en poder del ejército de mi mando.”

4.º Protesto contra el *sine qua non* del 10.º artículo, que no ha sido ejecutado, que dice que será enviado á Veracruz cuando el gobierno lo tenga por conveniente, atendiendo que el presidente mismo y su gabinete, estan convencidos que he cumplido puntualmente con mis promesas, que son las siguientes: que el ejército mexicano, compuesto de cuatro mil hombres, se retiraria de la posicion que ocupaba sobre el Rio Brazos hasta mas allá del Rio Grande; que todas las propiedades serian restituidas, como tambien los prisioneros de guerra; que se habia determinado embarcarme á bordo de la goleta de guerra tejana *invencible*, en la cual me embarqué finalmente el 1.º de junio, despues de haberme despedido de los tejanos, dirigiéndoles una corta arenga, en la qual les manifestaba mi eterna gratitud por su generosa conducta.”

5.º „Contra el acto de violencia cometida en mi persona, y al abuso que he sido expuesto, forzandome á regresar á tierra el 4 del actual, puramente porque ciento treinta voluntarios, bajo el mando del general T. J. Green, recientemente desembarcados en las playas de Velasco, procedentes de Nueva-Orleans, habian pedido tumultuariamente y con amenazas, que mi persona fuese puesta á su disposicion, cuya entrega se ejecutó, en el mismo dia en que el gobierno recibió del general Filisola la contestacion en que manifestaba que habia estrictamente cumplido con lo que se estipulo en el convenio. Repito que protesto contra la condescendencia del presidente y su gabinete, dando sus órdenes á este efecto, y por medio de esta medida se ha hecho un espectáculo de mi persona á estos hombres, como antiguamente se hacia con los geses de las naciones conquistadas, considerandoles como trofeos de sus victorias; con la diferencia que en mis circunstancias un tratado solemne me protegia.”

„Por ultimo, protesto contra la violencia á mi persona, habiéndoseme puesto en una estrecha prisión, rodeado de centinelas, y

Excerpt from *La Opinion* No. 166 (December 16), with Santa Anna's list of protests to Texas President David G. Burnet on June 9, 1836 (from *Telegraph and Texas Register* No. 32, October 4)

with far less training and combat experience, the Texian Army would be no match against these combined forces in a pitched battle. Houston's choices were to order another retreat and face both the wrath of his government and a likely mutiny by his own men or to gamble Texas independence on the fervor of his troops and their penchant for overcoming remarkably bad odds. Fortunately for Houston, Santa Anna would offer an alternative.

Texian troops captured the president-general of Mexico the following day, April 22. Santa Anna had spent the night hiding in the marsh, and in the morning had come across an abandoned cabin where he traded his fine general's uniform for a simple pair of trousers and a private's light jacket. He made a few miles on foot but was spotted by a party of Texans on horseback. Having satisfied their bloodlust the day before, they marched him back to the camp without realizing who they had just taken prisoner. Santa Anna's ruse unraveled upon arrival in the Texian camp, where his troops--prisoners like himself--greeted their leader with calls of "El Presidente!" Most of the Texans would have killed the architect of Tornel's Decree immediately and without mercy, but Houston saw an opportunity. He would spare Santa Anna's life if the Mexican commander could accept his status as a prisoner of war. Not only did Santa Anna agree, but he replied that he had tired of war and was prepared to negotiate the boundaries of Mexico and Texas. Houston was no fool and knew that Mexico would likely reject any terms negotiated by their dictator while he was being held as a prisoner of war with a literal gun to his head. Instead he obtained a concession of more practical significance in the moment: Santa Anna dictated a letter to Filisola ordering that he withdraw his forces to Béxar and that Urrea pull back to Guadalupe Victoria. Had either general defied their commander's order as the ploy of a man putting self before country, then the fates of Mexico and Texas would doubtless have unfolded quite differently. But neither did, and although the details would require rounds of diplomacy, saber rattling, and occasional bloodshed, Texas had gained its liberty, which Mexico would never seriously threaten again.

Santa Anna signed two Treaties of Velasco on May 14, one public and one private. In both he agreed not to take up arms against Texas again during its war for independence, and nor would he use his influence to have others do so. The Mexican Army was to cease hostilities and withdraw from the territory of Texas, to the other side of the Rio Grande. And as soon as it should be deemed proper, General Santa Anna would be returned to Veracruz. As it happened, Texas did not deem it proper to release the General back into Mexico until February 1837. Meanwhile, the Mexican government refused either to ratify any part of the treaty or to recognize Texas as an independent nation, nor would it until the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the Mexican-American War in 1848. But in 1836, few Mexicans or Texans believed the war was truly over, and most of Santa Anna's forces clamored to return to the fight. The sharpest rebukes, ironically, fell on Filisola for following Santa Anna's order to retreat. In Mexico City, he was stripped of his rank, with Urrea promoted to commander of the army. In a matter of months Urrea raised a force of 6000 troops at Matamoros for the reconquest of Texas, but they were directed instead to put down a series of federalist revolts across the Mexican interior. When Santa Anna returned to Mexico in 1837, Urrea turned against his former commander, taking the field against him at the Battle of Mazatlán. Yet Santa Anna managed to prevail and would command Mexican forces against the United States a decade later. Losing Texas to Houston was painful, but his loss to General Zachary Taylor would cost Mexico 55% of its total territory. Sam Houston was elected the first president of the Republic of Texas on September 5, 1836, defeating Stephen Austin handily. And in 1848, when the United States made Texas its 28th state, he was elected one of its first two senators.

## **LA OPINION, PERIODICO OFICIAL**

At the time of the Texas Revolution, *La Opinion, periodico oficial del gobierno superior de San Luis Potosí*, appears to have been the only newspaper published in San Luis Potosí. As its name suggests, it was the official newspaper of the state government, printed at the government printing office by José María Infante. Infante had printed an earlier periodical, *El Yunque de la Libertad* (Anvil of Freedom), from 1832 until beginning production of *La Opinion* in 1834. *La Opinion* itself would continue until 1837. As with most Mexican periodicals of this era, surviving copies of *La Opinion* are quite scarce. We trace only six institutions with any holdings, including extras and supplements: [Yale, 89 issues; SMU, 7 issues (all 1835); Bancroft, 2 issues (both late 1836); UTexas, 1 issue (1837); UTSA, 1 issue (1834); and Huntington, 1 extra (1836)]. The long file of 55 issues and extras that we offer here--all dating from January 1 to December 15, 1836--is second only to that held by Yale. Yet the collection at Yale includes only 39 issues and extras for 1836, and fewer than half of these (19) date to the war months of January to June. In contrast, our run contains 29 issues and extras from this same period, nearly half of which are unique. For the entire year, our run lacks only six issues: Nos. 122, 127, 141, 150, 167, and 168.

We have traced no comparable run of any 1836 Mexican periodical ever offered at auction or in the trade, and the only such record we have located in an American institution is the 1836 file of *Diario del Gobierno de la República Mexicana* (Mexico City) at the Library of Congress. This is no small detail in documenting the history of the Texas Revolution as it unfolded, as the only Texian newspaper during these war months, the *Telegraph and Texas Register*, issued no numbers from March 24 to August 2. **Our file of *La Opinion* and the file of *Diario del Gobierno* at LOC are thus among the most complete periodical records of the war.** In 1963, Edward Eberstadt & Sons offered an extensive run of the *Telegraph* in their monumental Catalogue 162, which was devoted entirely to Texas. No less an authority than Archibald Hanna observed in his forward to the catalogue that he considered this file to be the best item in a remarkable list. Priced at \$7500 (more than \$110,000 today), it was also the most expensive. But the Eberstadt file began with the issue for August 2, weeks after the war had ended. In the past 25 years, several issues of both the *Telegraph* and *La Opinion* have appeared at auction. Post-war issues of the former have sold for \$2000-4000. In 2024, the April 29 issue of *La Opinion* (No. 132), with waterstaining and a tattered top edge but containing Interim President José Justo Corro's repeal of the Tornel Decree, brought \$10,800 at Heritage Auctions. In 2025, also at Heritage, four more 1836 issues brought a total of \$12,375. The only other war-date issue or extra of *La Opinion* in commerce appears to have been the January 2 Alcance (extra) of No. 129, reporting the departure of Santa Anna's army from San Luis, which made \$56 at Anderson Galleries in 1922 (\$4880 today).

As a group, the issues of *La Opinion* that we offer here are in exceptional condition. All are untrimmed with wide margins on laid or wove paper, and although a few issues have old stab holes along the left margin, there is no evidence that any were ever bound. Apart from occasional marginal waterstains, nearly all of these issues are unstained, unfoxed, and in very good condition or better. Most issues contain information on the events in Texas, but given that such news either had to cross the Chihuahuan Desert or travel from Mexico City before reaching San Luis, there is often a one-to-two week lag between the date when an event occurred and the date of its appearing in print. Texas-related material includes first-hand reports on the progress of the war--often from well-known participants such as Santa Anna and Urrea, but also from common officers; laws and

decrees from Mexico City pertaining to the war; and editorials offering local (and usually critical) perspectives on Texian outrages.

Some highlights include (recorded copies in [ ]; apparently unique unless so noted):

No. 115, January 2, Alcance: Broadside announcing Santa Anna's departure from San Luis Potosí to confront revolutionaries in Texas. Anderson Galleries described it in 1922 as "A fiery broadside wherein the Texans are characterized as 'vile foreign ingrates' [Huntington].

No. 116, January 8: Front page contains an early printing of the Tornel Decree, stating that any foreigner combatants captured in Texas would be treated as pirates and summarily executed. Streeter could find no surviving example of a Mexico City printing, and this printing from San Luis is three days earlier than Streeter's own copy of a Tamaulipas printing [Yale].

No. 118, January 22: Pages 2-3 contain a long and detailed account of military actions at sea involving Texian Navy officer William Hurd and his armed schooner, *San Felipe*.

No. 119, January 29: Front page contains decree that new commandancias will be established in Coahuila and Tejas to prevent the revolt from spreading [Yale; another copy sold at Heritage in 2025 for \$4000].

No. 120, February 5: Pages 1-3 contain the only known Spanish translation and Mexican printing of the first message delivered by Texas governor Henry Smith on Nov. 16, 1835. An English-language broadside of the message printed at San Felipe de Austin brought \$18,750 at Heritage in 2018. Accompanied on pages 3-4 by a long editorial response to Smith's message [Yale].

No. 121, February 12: Pages 1-4 contain Spanish translations of accounts regarding the ill-fated Texian expedition against Tampico in November 1835 [Yale].

No. 121, February 15, Alcance: Unrecorded broadside providing an account of fifty Texian colonists who fled after an aborted attack on the city of Mier in January and were captured by the citizens of Ciudad Guerrero. Gen. Francisco Vital Fernandez raising an auxiliary division of 500 troops at Matamoros.

No. 124, March 10, Suplemento: Unrecorded broadside printing a February 27 letter from Urrea to Santa Anna that reports his successful surprise attack on Texian forces at San Patricio. Urrea writes that 16 Texans were killed and 21 taken prisoner, and that he also took their flag. He concludes: "Ahora me ocupa en buscar al Dr. Grant parece se halla con 50 rifleros." Urrea would surprise Grant's party on March 1, killing 40 (including Grant) and capturing six more.

No. 125, March 11: Announces the unexpected death of Interim President Miguel Barragá at Mexico City on March 1.

No. 128, April 1: Front page contains Santa Anna's announcement of victories in Bexar, noting that he had made an example of the rebels: "era necesario contener y castigar tamaña osadía, y ya en S. Patricio, y Lipautlitan, y esta Ciudad [Bexar] se han presentado ejemplares consiguientes á

tanta temeridad.” Page 2 contains his March 6 report on the destruction of the Alamo, including having seen the corpses of Bowie, Travis, and Crockett. Page 3 contains a Spanish translation of R. M. Williamson’s famous letter to Travis at the Alamo, ending “P. S. For God’s sake, hold out until we can help you” (Por Dios sostenganse Vdes. hasta que los podamos auxiliar).

No. 130, April 15: Page 4 contains an account of the Alamo from an officer of the 1st battalion of San Luis who had since joined Urrea’s division [Yale; another copy sold at Heritage in 2025 for \$4500].

No. 131, April 22: Pages 1-2 contain an April 4 account from the Port of Matamoros describing the most important naval engagement of the war, an encounter between the Mexican man-of-war *General Bravo* and the Texian schooner *Invincible*. Page 2 publishes a report on the victory at Coleto Creek by Rafael de Lovara from Refugio on March 21. Pages 2-3 carry the longer report of Urrea to Santa Anna on the Goliad Campaign and Fannin’s surrender, including the fact that Urrea had taken 600 prisoners. Page 3 also contains a March 23 letter from Urrea reporting on the surrender of William Ward’s Georgia Brigade near Guadalupe Victoria [Yale].

No. 132, April 29: Front page contains the April 9 decree of Interim President José Justo Corro repealing the Tornel Decree of December 30, 1835, replacing the sentence of death for captured Texian rebels with a sentence of banishment [copy sold at Heritage in 2024 for \$10,800].

No. 134, May 13: Front page contains an April 27 report from Matamoros detailing the advances of Mexican forces against the Texian rebels, concluding that “From the tenor of all that we have seen and has been written about Texas, it must be inferred that by now the Mexican nation will have recovered that precious part of its territory which, with the blackest ingratitude, had been usurped by its new settlers” (Del tenor de cuanto hemos visto y se escribe sobre Tejas, debe inferirse que á la fecha he brá recobrado la nación mejica na aquilla preciosa parte de su territorio que con la más negra ingratitud, habían usurpado sus nuevos pobledores) [Yale].

No. 136, May 27: Pages 1-2 contain several reports of the Mexican defeat at San Jacinto and the dramatic news of Santa Anna’s capture [Yale]

No. 137, June 3: Front page contains José Justo Corro’s announcements to Tornel that the war against the Texans will continue and that the Mexican government will refuse to recognize any agreements made by Santa Anna while imprisoned. Until the president’s safe return, all flags are to be flown at half-mast in military contexts and black crepe ribbons will be tied to all flags of the Army corps [Yale].

No. 138, June 10: Front page contains Tornel’s announcement that a Legion of Honor is to be established for veterans of the Texas War [Yale].

No. 138, June 14, Alcance: Unrecorded broadside warning against anarchists using Santa Anna’s capture as a pretext for overturning the Supreme Government.

No. 139, June 17: Pages 2-3 contain an attack on Filisola for following Santa Anna’s order to retreat and a spirited letter from Urrea to his troops on June 5 pressing a return to the fight.

No. 142, July 8: Page 4 contains a July 1 statement issued by officers of the Mexican Army at Matamoros, admonishing any anarchists and would-be dictators emboldened by Santa Anna's capture and proclaiming "Let the wretch who interrupts the tranquility and public order to hinder its operations against external enemies prepare his neck!" [Yale, another copy sold at Heritage in 2025 (with No. 144) for \$3875].

No. 143, July 13: Pages 2-3 contain a two-page table listing all of the citizens of San Luis Potosí who have made financial contributions to the war with Texas and the amounts given. We trace no other publication of this table or any of the information it contains [Yale].

No. 144, July 19, Alcance: Unrecorded broadside announcing Gen. Valentín Canalizo's total victory over the rebels in Oaxaca on July 13. This was one of the internal rebellions that made it difficult for Mexico's central government to continue the war in Texas.

No. 147, August 26: Pages 2-3 contain a two-page table listing all casualties (dead and wounded) suffered by the 1st Battalion of San Luis Potosí at the Alamo, Llano el Perdido (Battle of Coleto and Goliad Campaign), and the occupation of Brazoria. We trace no other publication of this table or any of the information it contains.

No. 152, September 9: Pages 2-3 reprint a proclamation by Texian Brig. Gen. Thomas Green of June 27: "Proclamation to the Free People of Texas. Your enemy, the Mexican, is again on the western border threatening to annihilate the men, women, and children of Texas." Commentary on the proclamation follows.

No. 153, September 16: Pages 2-3 reprint an order by Texian Brig. Gen. and Secretary of War Thomas Jefferson Rusk of May 10: "Do you have confidence in the enemy with whom you are fighting? Can you have confidence in Santa Anna who killed your brothers and friends in la Bahia?" Commentary on the proclamation follows [Yale, Bancroft].

No. 159, October 28. Pages 3-4 contain a "Manifesto" signed at Matamoros on October 16 by more than a dozen Mexican officers, demanding an order to return to the campaign to defeat the rebels of Texas and to rescue Santa Anna [Yale].

No. 162, November 19: Page 2 reprints stories from New Orleans newspapers detailing discord among the Texians, including reports of Generals Lamar and Rusk accusing President Burnet of treason for desiring to free Santa Anna. Page 3 reprints from the *Telegraph* a letter by Stephen F. Austin of August 4, detailing his candidacy for President of Texas [Yale].

No. 166, December 15: Pages 2-3 contain the list of protests that Santa Anna presented to Texas President David G. Burnet on June 9, 1836, together with Burnet's response (translated from the *Telegraph and Texas Register* No. 32, October 4) [Yale, Bancroft].

**Altogether, this extensive file of *La Opinion* offers a nearly unparalleled record of the Texas Revolution--through the lens of the Mexican press--for the entire decisive year of 1836. We do not believe that any comparable source has ever been offered in commerce.**

Relevant sources:

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[Texas Revolution--Early Mexican Periodicals]. LA OPINION, PERIODICO OFICIAL DEL GOBIERNO SUPERIOR DE SAN LUIS POTOSÍ. NO. 115 TO NO. 166 (JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 15, 1836). San Luis Potosi, Mexico. Impronta del Gobierno á cargo del Ciudadano José María Infante. 49 sequential numbers for the year 1836 (lacking six issues) and 6 broadside extras (4 alcances and 2 suplementos). All numbers [4] pp. ea., 4to. All printed on laid or wove paper, untrimmed, and apart from a few stab holes, no evidence of ever having been removed from a previous binding. All numbers and extras housed removable plastic jackets that permit reading while remaining in sleeve. Some issues with marginal dampstaining or tanning (heaviest on a few of the latest issues), but the set is generally in very good condition or better.

**\$110,000.** HOLD.

# ALCANCE al num. 115. de la Opinion.

SAN LUIS POTOSI ENERO 2 DE 1836.

Hoy á las cinco de la mañana ha salido de esta Capital el Exmo Sr. General Presidente D. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna con dirección á Leóna Vicario para seguir luego su marcha sobre Tejas.

Durante un mes que ha permanecido en esta Capital, sus autoridades y vecindario han tenido lugar de observar el modo franco, agradable y político con que el Exmo Sr. Presidente ha tenido la bondad de manifestarse generalmente, aceptando con gusto los obsequios que en Palacio, en el Teatro y Plaza de Toros se le han hecho, grangeandose de esta manera el mas relevante aprecio de este vecindario. Su marcha se ha visto con general sentimiento, sin embargo de que el objeto noble que lo conduce á Tejas le disminuye, y mas la esperanza proxima de que regrese triunfante de los viles extranjeros que han turbado la tranquilidad de nuestro paiz é intentan desmembrarlo.

Los cuerpos que han marchado sobre los invasores y los que aun estan al llegar compondrán de ocho á diez mil, no carabinas, sino SOLDADOS MEXICANOS, valientes siempre en la campaña, y mas cuando se trata de defender contra extranjeros ingratos el honor nacional y la integridad del Territorio. Van al campo los

valientes generales Filisola, Andrade, Amador, Arago, Castrillón, Woll, Ramirez y Sesma, Gómez, Tolsa y con ellos otros jefes y oficiales no menos ilustres que en diversas campañas tienen acreditada su intrepidéz y patriotismo.

Los recursos pecuniarios durante este mes han sido sobrados en la Sub-Comisaria para pagar hasta fines del presente enero las tropas que han salido, además de surtirlas de vestuario y cuanto han necesitado para hacer llevaderas las penalidades de la campaña. Entraron en dicha oficina 519.000 ps. y se han repartido 314.000 ps. quedando de fondo mas de 200.000 con los que y lo mas que en adelante ingresará hay suficiente para ir llenando los gastos de esta expedicion.

San Luis ha debido al Exmo. Sr. Presidente las mas expresivas demostraciones de aprecio por los recursos sobrados de gente y dinero que en él se le han presentado, y San Luis por medio de sus autoridades ha protestado no economizar medio alguno de auxiliar la empresa nacional á que marcha el Ejercito. Los Potosinos deben gloriarse de no ser los últimos en manifestar cuanto estiman la dignidad de una Patria ultrajada por el atrevimiento de extranjeros que abrigaba como hijos en su seno, y que le han correspondido con la mas negra ingratitud.—EE.