

JOAQUÍN DE ARREDONDO IN TEXAS AND NORTHEASTERN NEW SPAIN, 1811-1821

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Joaquín de Arredondo was the most powerful and influential person in northeastern New Spain from 1811 to 1821. His rise to prominence began in 1811 when the Spanish military officer and a small royalist army suppressed Miguel Hidalgo's revolution in the province of Nuevo Santander. This prompted the Spanish government to promote Arredondo to Commandant General of the Eastern Internal Provinces, making him the foremost civil and military authority in northeastern New Spain. Arredondo's tenure as commandant general proved difficult, as he had to deal with insurgents, invaders from the United States, hostile Indians, pirates, and smugglers. Because warfare in Europe siphoned much needed military and financial support, and disagreements with New Spain's leadership resulted in reductions of the commandant general's authority, Arredondo confronted these threats with little assistance from the Spanish government. In spite of these obstacles, he maintained royalist control of New Spain from 1811 to 1821, and, in doing so, changed the course of Texas, Mexican, and United States history. In 1813, he defeated insurgents and American invaders at the Battle of Medina, and from 1817 to 1820, his forces stopped Xavier Mina's attempt to bring independence to New Spain, prevented French exiles from establishing a colony in Texas, and defeated James Long's filibustering expedition from the United States. Although unable to sustain Spanish rule in 1821, Arredondo's approval of Moses Austin's petition to settle families from the United States in Texas in 1820 and his role in the development of Antonio López de Santa Anna, meant the officer continued to influence Mexico. Perhaps Arredondo's greatest importance is that the study of his life provides a means to learn about an internationally contested region during one of the most turbulent eras in North American history.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Anything bad written about Arredondo can well be believed, for he was truly bad

Carlos María de Bustamante.

[Arredondo] was no more cruel or bloody than the majority of the military men of his age

Biographer Judith Jiménez.

On August 18, 1813, a Spanish army under Commandant General Joaquín de Arredondo defeated some 1,400 Mexican revolutionaries and American adventurers on a plain south of San Antonio, Texas. At the time, Texas was a province of New Spain and a part of Spain's vast American empire. The revolutionaries who fought in the battle had hoped victory would free Texas from Spanish rule, thereby providing a foothold from which to bring independence to the rest of New Spain. Their American allies wanted to see Texas independent in the hopes of one day joining the province to the United States. The Spanish army's victory ended these dreams, returned Texas to the royalist fold, and helped suppress the revolution that had raged across northeastern New Spain for the past three years.¹

The Battle of Medina was one of many nineteenth century conflicts fought for control of an area known as the Eastern Internal Provinces, today's Texas, Coahuila, Nuevo León, and

¹ For more on the Battle of Medina, see Donald E. Chipman and Harriett Denise Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999); Julia Kathryn Garrett, *Green Flag over Texas: A Story of the Last Years of Spain in Texas* (New York: Cordova Press, 1939); Ted Schwarz, *Forgotten Battlefield of the First Texas Revolution: The Battle of Medina, August 18, 1813* (Austin: Eakin Press, 1985); Joaquín de Arredondo, "Joaquín de Arredondo's Report of the Battle of the Medina, August 18, 1813," trans. Mattie A. Hatcher, *The Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association* 11 (January 1908): 220-236; Carlos María de Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810* (México D.F.: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana, 1985); and Judith Miriam Jiménez, "Joaquín de Arredondo: Loyalist Officer in New Spain, 1810-1821" (Ph.D diss., University of Michigan, 1933).

Tamaulipas. The Spanish claimed what would be the eastern provinces as part of their New Spain colony in the sixteenth century, and because of the region's relative infertility, lack of mineral wealth, and hostile Indians inhabitants, few Europeans challenged this claim for hundreds of years. Those who did were unwilling to invest the resources required to take the land from Spain. The situation changed in the early nineteenth century with the outbreak of the Napoleonic Wars in Europe, revolutionary upheaval across Spanish America, and United States westward expansion. Suddenly, the eastern provinces became a desired commodity. Citizens of the United States wanted land to cultivate cotton, insurgents needed a base from which to spread revolution, French exiles sought to create an overseas empire, and pirates and brigands wanted a place to conduct their illicit operations. These different groups all recognized that the eastern provinces would fit their needs and sought to wrest the provinces from Spain's control.²

Unfortunately for Spain, these challenges came at a time when the nation was at its weakest. Poor decision-making and financial mismanagement had seen Spain fall from the world's leading power in the 1500s to become one of Western Europe's weakest nations by the turn of the nineteenth century. When French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Spain in 1808 and replaced its king with his brother Joseph, it threw the Spanish empire further into discord. Colonial leaders did not know from whom to follow orders and lacking financial aid from Europe, could do little when revolutions arose throughout the Americas. Miguel Hidalgo's uprising in New Spain was particularly violent. In order to suppress Hidalgo and the

² Garrett, *Green Flag over Texas*, 142, 192-193; Daniel W. Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007) 126-130. For an overview of Colonial Texas history, see Donald E. Chipman and Harriet Denise Joseph, *Spanish Texas, 1519-1821* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010) and Odie B. Faulk, *The Last Years of Spanish Texas, 1778-1821* (The Hague: Mouton, 1964).

revolutionaries that arose in his wake, New Spain's colonial government redirected funds meant to protect and sustain the eastern provinces. This left the region as one of the weakest parts of Spain's waning empire.³

From 1811 to 1821, Spain's colonial government in Mexico City looked to Joaquín de Arredondo to maintain Spanish rule of the eastern provinces. A wealthy aristocrat from Barcelona, Arredondo spent his youth serving in the Spanish military. He arrived in New Spain in 1808 after receiving orders to defend the port of Veracruz in case of English invasion. The English never came, but in 1810, Arredondo received a new assignment: he needed to suppress a revolution in Nuevo Santander. In 1811, the Spanish officer arrived in the Eastern Internal Provinces, where he gathered an army of loyalists and set about defeating the various insurgent bands who called the region home. He was so successful in doing so that the Spanish government rewarded Arredondo with the title commandant general of the Eastern Internal Provinces, making him responsible for most civil and military matters in northeastern New Spain. In ensuing years, the commandant general would have to fight revolutionaries, unincorporated Indian tribes, foreign invaders, and a host of other factions looking to overthrow Spanish rule. He successfully did so using a constrained budget and with little help from the colonial government.

This dissertation looks at the life of Joaquín de Arredondo from 1811 to 1821 and explains how his decisions affected the eastern provinces and the course of North American history. As a Spanish officer and commandant general, he influenced prominent figures in United States and Mexican history, such as Moses Austin and Antonio López de Santa Anna. His

³ For a well-written overview of Mexican independence, see Timothy Henderson, *The Mexican Wars for Independence* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2009).

actions also saved, and destroyed, innumerable lives. Without him, Mexico may have gained its independence sooner or in a different fashion; Spain may not have allowed Americans to settle Texas, thereby precluding the Texas Revolution and the U.S.-Mexico War. On the other hand, without Arredondo's leadership northeastern New Spain could have fallen into anarchy, leading to more, or perhaps less, violence than occurred under his rule. By telling of Arredondo's life, the dissertation also looks at the Eastern Internal Provinces during an important time in history. Events in the eastern provinces from 1811 to 1821 set the stage for the Texas Revolution and a war between Mexico and the United States for control of much of North America.

Many historians have written on Joaquín de Arredondo, but few look at him in detail and most offer one-dimensional analyses of the man. Carlos María de Bustamante began this practice shortly after Mexico gained its independence with his book *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana*. Bustamante was a liberal statesman who spent much of the period from 1810 to 1821 in prison for promoting independence from Spain. As such, Bustamante harbored an intense dislike for Spain, blaming the nation for most of independent Mexico's problems. This aversion is on display in *Cuadro histórico de la revolución Mexicana*, a multi-volume history of Mexico's struggle to break free of Spanish rule. In the books, Bustamante portrayed almost every Spaniard as despotic and disingenuous. He reserved some especially harsh words for Arredondo, noting, "Anything bad written about Arredondo can well be believed, for he was truly bad." To Bustamante, the commandant general was a power hungry despot, motivated by a cruel desire to oppress others. This yearning even led Arredondo to challenge Viceroy Félix

María Calleja. In one telling quotation, Bustamante claimed that, “Mexico had two Viceroys, Calleja and Arredondo.”⁴

Bustamante’s contemporaries, Lucas Alamán and José Eleuterio González, also reserved scorn for Arredondo, but they praised the officer for his battlefield prowess and bureaucratic efficiency. In *Historia de Méjico desde los primeros movimientos que prepararon su independencia en el año 1808 hasta la época presente*, the conservative Alamán portrayed New Spain’s Indians and Mestizos as a horde in need of supervision. Upper-class Mexicans, like Agustín Iturbide, were Alamán’s heroes, while Spaniards occupied a middle ground. Their efforts to maintain New Spain in the royalist sphere were unreasonable and flawed, but their desire to impose order on the lower classes was understandable. As such, Alamán sympathized with Arredondo’s motives but not his actions. To Alamán, Arredondo was cool and efficient during battle, but could be bloodthirsty and excessive once fighting was complete. Writing not long after Alamán, José Eluetario González—who was married to Arredondo’s illegitimate daughter for a brief time—portrayed the commandant general in a similar manner. He devoted an entire chapter to Arredondo in his *Colección de noticias y documentos para la historia del estado de N. León*. In González’s view, the commandant general was a product of an inefficient Spanish system. As such, he made poor decisions and could be unnecessarily cruel.⁵

Historians largely ignored Arredondo and the Eastern Internal Provinces until the first years of the twentieth century when Herbert Eugene Bolton led a reexamination of Spanish

⁴ Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 355 (quotations); Jiménez, “Loyalist Officer in New Spain,” VI.

⁵ Lucas Alamán, *Historia de Méjico desde los primeros movimientos que prepararon su independencia en el año de 1808, hasta la época present* (México D.F.: Impr. de J. M. Lara, 1849-1852); José Eleuterio González, *Colección de noticias y documentos para la historia del estado de Nuevo León: corregidos y ordenados de manera que formen una relación seguida* (Monterrey: Tip de A. Mier, 1867). González married Arredondo’s illegitimate daughter in 1836.

colonialism. A professor at the University of Texas and the University of California, Berkley, Bolton portrayed the Spanish in an overwhelmingly positive light. To Bolton, Spain benevolently attempted to bring civilization, progress, and Christianity to the barbarous Indians of North America. After Mexico gained its independence, it lost Spain's guiding hand, leading the northern frontier into a period of chaos and arrested development. Bolton focused primarily on "great men," such as prominent missionaries, government officials, and high-ranking military officers. His histories included very little on the typical civilian on the frontier. As a professor, Bolton passed his pro-Spanish bias and his great man fixation to his 104 Ph.D. students. One such student was Arthur Scott Aiton, who worked under Bolton for his doctorate in history from the University of California. After graduating in 1923, Aiton moved on to teach at the University of Michigan where in 1933 he supervised Judith Jiménez's Ph.D. dissertation, "Joaquín de Arredondo: Loyalist Officer in New Spain, 1810-1821."⁶

Jiménez's dissertation is an admirable military history of don Joaquín's time in New Spain that unfortunately suffers from a lack of sources. In constructing her narrative, Jiménez scoured archives in the United States and carefully examined first-person accounts of the independence period. She also studied the works of Alamán and Bustamante. Unfortunately, she did not have access to archives in Mexico or Spain, and when she wrote her dissertation, most secondary sources written on the eastern provinces focused on Texas and military matters. Accordingly, Jiménez's dissertation comes in at only 167 pages, features Texas too

⁶ David J. Weber, "Turner, the Boltonians, and the Borderlands," in *Myth and the History of the Hispanic Southwest Essays by David J. Weber* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987), 33-43; John Francis Bannon, *Herbert Eugene Bolton: The Historian and the Man, 1870-1953* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1978). For examples of Arredondo in works from the latter nineteenth century, see Hubert Howe Bancroft, *The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft: History of Mexico, 1804-1824* Vol. IV, (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft, 1885) and Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar, *The Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar* (New York: AMS Press, 1973).

prominently, and has very little on social, political, economic, and personal matters concerning the commandant general. Indeed, three of the dissertation's seven chapters focus on ancillary events surrounding Arredondo, not the man himself. The author recognized this dearth in source material in her introduction, stating, "there is more material in Mexico which should be perused."⁷

Lack of sources is to blame for many of the deficiencies of "Joaquín de Arredondo: Loyalist Officer in New Spain," but Jiménez's devotion to the Boltonian school is responsible for others. As a "great man," Jiménez viewed Arredondo in an uncritical light and ignored the Spanish officer's bad decisions and atrocities. Whereas Bustamante's Arredondo was reprehensible, Jiménez's was "no more cruel or bloody than the majority of the military men of his age." Outside factors were to blame for don Joaquín's failures, not poor decision making. Like many Boltonians, Jiménez was also fixated on Texas and United States history. She devoted an entire chapter of her dissertation to James Long, an American who had little historical impact but was a fixture in Texas history books in the early 1900s, seemingly for the sole reason that he was an American in Spanish territory. Jiménez also overlooked the role that Indians, soldiers, and everyday citizens played in Arredondo's life and the development of the eastern provinces.⁸

Jiménez's dissertation would have benefitted from the abundance of scholarship published shortly before and shortly after her dissertation. In the 1920s and 1930s, historians researched extensively in archives in Mexico and formulated new perspectives from which to

⁷ Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," I (quotation).

⁸ Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," XIII, 139 (quotation on page 139). Although I find fault with some aspects of Jiménez's work, her evaluation of certain military matters is excellent, and I cite her heavily in some sections of this work.

view Arredondo and the eastern provinces. In *Green Flag over Texas*, Julia K. Garrett examined the 1812 revolutionary takeover of Texas and argued that Arredondo's retribution in the wake of the Battle of Medina was a major factor in Spain and Mexico's eventual loss of Texas. Carlos Castañeda's *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas* and Mattie Austin Hatcher's *The Opening of Texas to Foreign Settlement* looked into Arredondo's efforts to colonize Texas. Historians David Alberto Cossio and Alessio Robles provided counterpoints to these political and military narratives on Arredondo in their regional histories of northeastern Mexico. Whereas Cossio's *Historia de Nuevo León* viewed Arredondo as an excessive but competent commandant general while serving in Nuevo Leon, Robles's multiple historical works follow Bustamante's lead in portraying the Spanish officer to be cruel and disconnected.⁹

Scholarship on Arredondo declined after Robles's death in 1957 but has seen a recent resurgence. Some of these new works are summaries of previous scholarship with new interpretations. In 1992, for example, Octavio Herrera Pérez published a brief account of Arredondo's political maneuvering as commandant general, "Joaquín de Arredondo, el predominio realista en las Provincias Internas de Oriente, 1810-1821." In 1999, Donald E. Chipman and Harriett Denise Joseph summarized past military research on Arredondo for a chapter in their book *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*. Adán Benavides Jr. looked at

⁹ Garrett, *Green Flag over Texas*; Carlos E Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas, 1519-1936* (Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones Co, 1936); Mattie Austin Hatcher, *The Opening of Texas to Foreign Settlement: 1801-1821* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1927); David A. Cossio, *Historia de Nuevo León* (Monterrey: J. Cantu Leal, 1925). For examples of Robles's works, see Vito Alessio Robles, *La primera imprenta en Coahuila* (México, D.F.: Universidad nacional de México Sección editorial, 1932) and Richard Lee Davis (trans.), "A translation, with notes, of Vito Alessio Robles' *Monterrey en la historia y en la leyenda*" (master's thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1950). For a biography of Robles, see Robert Oscar DeVette, "Vito Alessio Robles: Biographer of Mexican Cities" (Ph.D. diss. Florida State University, 1953).

Arredondo from a clerical standpoint in his article “Loss by Division: The Commandancy General Archive of the Eastern Internal Provinces” in the journal *The Americas*.¹⁰

Some historians have returned to the archives to tell untold stories of Arredondo’s time as commandant general. For example, Luis Jáuregui’s “La guerra de independencia en el noreste de la Nueva España y el comandante Joaquín de Arredondo,” provided a look at Arredondo’s dealings with political rivals and highlighted the officer’s struggle to enforce a royalist agenda in an unfriendly environment. Alberto Enderle’s 2013 dissertation “Contrabando y liberalismo. La transformación de la cultura política en las Provincias Internas de Oriente, 1808-1821” did this also. Additionally, Enderle used new research from Mexico to analyze economics in the eastern provinces and examine conflict between Arredondo and the elites of Monterrey.¹¹

This increase in scholarship indicates a need for a more comprehensive examination of Joaquín Arredondo’s life. By combining new interpretations of Arredondo, recently published secondary literature on related subjects, and original research in Spain, Mexico, and the United States, this dissertation shows a more balanced image of Arredondo. Instead of Bustamante’s

¹⁰ Octavio Herrera Pérez, “Joaquín de Arredondo, el predominio realista en las Provincias Internas de Oriente, 1810-1821,” *Memorias de la Academia de Mexicana de la historia* XXXV (1992): 43-78; Chipman and Joséph. *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*; Adán Benavides, Jr. “Loss by Division: The Commandancy General Archive of the Eastern Internal Provinces,” *The Americas* 43 (October 1986): 204.

¹¹ Jáuregui’s excellent study can be found in hard copy form in Luis Jáuregui, “La guerra de independencia en el noreste de la Nueva España y el comandante Joaquín de Arredondo,” *Memoria de las revoluciones de México*, 9 (Otoño 2010,) 56-79, but I used the online version found here, <http://www.terra.com.mx/memoria2010/articulo/1030428/La+Guerra+de+Independencia+en+el+noreste+de+la+Nueva+Espana+y+el+comandante+Joaquin+de+Arredondo.htm&paginaid=1> (accessed May 5, 2012). See also, Alberto Barrera Enderle, “Contrabando y liberalismo. La transformación de la cultura política en las Provincias Internas de Oriente, 1808-1821” (Ph.D. diss. University of California at Irvine, 2013). For an example of a work between the 1930s and the 1980s that provides detail on Arredondo, see Luis Navarro García, *Las provincias internas en el siglo XIX* (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1965).

cruel archetype or Jiménez's loyalist officer, the Arredondo who emerges from these pages is a complicated pragmatist. Emotion could control Arredondo, but it did not drive him, nor did devotion to a distant crown. Although he believed that his way of doing things was superior to others, he did not remain devoted to a single ethos. In the process of changing the eastern provinces, Arredondo himself changed.

This dissertation is divided into eleven body chapters. The first three focus on Arredondo's early life and military career prior to his ascendancy to the office of commandant general of the Eastern Internal Provinces. As a member of a long line of Spanish nobles, Arredondo entered military service at an early age. His time in the Spanish Royal Guards and the influence of his father, Nicolás, shaped the young Joaquín into a determined, ruthless, and capable man. These characteristics served him well upon receiving an assignment in New Spain where he used his military training to defeat the rebel followers of Miguel Hidalgo in Nuevo Santander. His efforts earned Arredondo a promotion to governor of the Nuevo Santander. While serving in this role, the governor had to tend to both administrative and military matters. This latter duty occupied much of Arredondo's attention in 1812, as he had to root out insurgents who had taken refuge in the Sierra Gordas of neighboring San Luis Potosí.

The following two chapters describe Arredondo's participation in the Battle of the Medina and its aftermath. In 1813, don Joaquín received a promotion to Commandant General of the Eastern Internal Provinces, making him the most powerful civil and military authority in northeastern New Spain. His first assignment as commandant general was to stop a combined American and Mexican insurrection in Texas. In command of 1,800 men, Arredondo engaged these revolutionaries in battle near the Medina River and defeated the opposition in a one-

sided engagement. He followed up the victory by ordering harsh reprisals against those who had supported the insurrection. These measures ended the insurgency in Texas, but left the province destitute and open to attack by hostile Indians and American invaders.

Don Joaquín's arrival in Monterrey and his governance of Nuevo León, Nuevo Santander, and Coahuila are the subjects of the next two chapters. Upon entering his capital in Monterrey, Arredondo quickly dismissed local political leaders and ordered his soldiers to terrorize the city's population as a means of establishing his authority. He eventually forced elected officials, the clergy, and even the viceroy of New Spain to recognize the commandant general's office as the supreme authority in the eastern provinces. This did not leave Arredondo without challenges, as disease, invasion from the United States, and other issues threatened northeastern New Spain. Don Joaquín responded to these problems in a pragmatic and efficient manner, prompting one historian to note that although Arredondo was cruel, his reign was, "one of order and good administration."

From 1817 to 1820, Spanish revolutionaries, French exiles, hostile Indians, and American adventurers invaded the eastern provinces. Don Joaquín's responses to these incursions are the subject of two chapters. In an effort to bring about the independence of New Spain, in 1817, revolutionary Xavier Mina landed an invasion force in Nuevo Santander and constructed a fort near the town of Soto la Marina. To defeat Mina, Arredondo headed to the coast and laid siege to Soto la Marina, forcing its inhabitants to surrender after four days. A number of smaller threats to Spanish control of the eastern provinces followed this victory. From 1817 to 1820, pirates patrolled the coast, Comanche Indians made war on Coahuila and Texas, a group of French refugees established a base on the Texas coast, and American filibusters under James

Long invaded from the United States. Arredondo did not take to the field to confront these threats as he had done in the past. Instead, he relied on trusted officers to fulfill this duty.

The following two chapters are devoted to Arredondo and the eastern province during and after the final years of Spanish rule of Mexico. In 1820 and 1821, Arredondo feuded with the viceroy of New Spain and fought to retain power just as his rival did his best to remove it. Following the reinstatement of Spain's Constitution of 1812, Arredondo worked with local officials to implement liberal reforms and restore the economy of the eastern provinces. When Agustín de Iturbide reignited the movement for independence in 1821, Arredondo did everything he could to maintain royalist control. When he could hold off independence no longer, don Joaquín voluntarily lowered the Spanish flag and joined the newly independent government. Unfortunately for the commandant general, local leaders forced him from office and sent him into exile in Cuba, where he lived until his death in 1837. In don Joaquín's absence, it was unclear who controlled the eastern provinces, as Mexico was unable to deal with the region's various problems. From independence to the end of the nineteenth century, wars, revolutions, and invasions divided the Eastern Internal Provinces.

There are a number of limitations in writing a biography of a prominent Spaniard in colonial New Spain. As historian Donald Chipman noted in his article, "The Status of the Biography in the Historiography of New Spain," "Spaniards, as opposed to Americans, are inclined to be more fatalistic than introspective. They do not as a rule agonize over diaries, reflect on their importance as individuals, or question the propriety of their actions." Don Joaquín fit this profile. He left no diaries, few personal letters, and rarely reflected on past decisions. Although diplomatic correspondence and official edicts tell what don Joaquín did,

they rarely explain why he did them. Insight into the commandant general's past, strong personal opinions of contemporaries, and a general understanding of surrounding events allows for some explanation of Arredondo's intentions, but not all. Although many histories fill such voids with conjecture and platitudes, this dissertation minimizes the use of these methods. In instances where questions remain about central aspects of Arredondo's character and intent, analyses will include multiple informed explanations for his actions.¹²

Although these occasions are few and research in Mexico, Spain, and the United States has allowed for a multifaceted portrayal of don Joaquín, a number of questions about the former commandant general's life remain. The most glaring exclusion concerns Arredondo's physical appearance. No portrait of the man has been found and Spanish sources are vague concerning his physical description. There are also periods of don Joaquín's life where he disappears from the historical record or sources disagree on his whereabouts. For example, there are few sources on Arredondo's boyhood, his life from 1802 to 1808, and his final years from 1823 to 1837. Further research may add new insights into these lost eras or provide a better description of Arredondo's personal life and corporeal appearance.

An aside on terminology is necessary. This dissertation refers to Arredondo by his last name and his military and political titles. "Don Joaquín" is also used. This latter term is not meant to be reverential, but is instead used for aesthetic reasons. Although it is commonly applied to anyone from the Western Hemisphere, the term "American" is used for persons who were born in, or identified themselves as citizens of, the United States. When discussing history

¹² Donald Chipman, "The Status of the Biography in the Historiography of New Spain," *The Americas* 27 (January 1971): 327-339 (quotation on page 328).

before Mexico gained its independence, “Mexican” is reserved for persons from New Spain who sought to overthrow colonial rule.

Finally, it must be pointed out that while Arredondo was an important figure who had a significant impact on the course of Mexican, Texas, and United States history, he was in no way a “good man,” especially when judged by modern moral standards. He terrorized those he ruled over, he committed atrocities, and he was responsible for countless deaths. This dissertation does not attempt to justify Arredondo’s actions. It only attempts to understand them.

CHAPTER 2

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON, 1775-1810

You do not have to be only on the defensive, but ready to set out on a sortie to annihilate them on the battlefield.

Nicolás Arredondo

Joaquín de Arredondo was born to a wealthy noble family that had called northern Spain home for centuries. The first people to use the name Arredondo lived in the province of Cantabria, where they had earned the name “de Arredondo” in reference to the rounded or *redondo* hills that dotted the surrounding countryside. Of Celtic ancestry, the Arredondos had light skin, fair-hair, and blue or green eyes, features that would later serve the family well in a Spanish society that often limited the social mobility of persons with dark complexions. Like most in Spain, these first Arredondos were devotedly Catholic farmers and ranchers. They were also likely subjects of one of the many feudal Christian kings who had come to rule Iberia following the collapse of the Roman Empire.¹³

At some point in the Middle Ages, the Arredondo family rose out of the laboring class into the landed aristocracy. This elevation in social status likely came after Arredondo men performed some form of military service for a regional ruler, as kings often bestowed land grants and hereditary titles on subjects who fought under their banner during times of war. Those who distinguished themselves in battle received special compensation. It is unclear in

¹³ Antonio Rangel, “La Familia Arredondo,” *Hogar de Dallas* XI (2008): 16-19; Bartolomé Bennassar, *The Spanish Character: Attitudes and Mentalities from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 218; Florentino Antón Reglero, “El linaje de los Arredondo en la Santoña de los siglos XVIII y XIX” *Ayuntamiento de Santoña* (Santoña: Comisión de Cultura, 2004) <http://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=1064802> (accessed May 14, 2012). A summary of Spain’s early history can be found in numerous titles. For a concise history, see the articles featured in Raymond Carr ed., *Spain: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

which conflict the first Arredondos made their name, but it was possibly one of the many civil wars fought between the various Christian kingdoms of Iberia. The Arredondos may also have earned distinction in the *Reconquista*, an eight-century long conflict that began in 711 C.E. when the Moors, an Islamic group from North Africa, invaded Iberia. Military service brought the Arredondos land and entry into the nobility, the latter distinction allowing Arredondo men to adopt the title “don” and Arredondo women “doña.” If the fierce lions adorning the Arredondo family coat of arms are any indication, the family was proud of their military tradition.¹⁴

The fifteenth century brought change for the Arredondos and Iberia. That century, the various Iberian kingdoms united, creating the nation of Spain. The last decade of the fifteenth century also saw the expulsion of the Moors from Iberia and Christopher Columbus’s 1492 voyage to the Americas at the helm of a Spanish fleet. This latter event proved fortuitous for the newly created Spain, as the Spanish soon subdued many New World inhabitants and used their labor to extract mineral wealth for exportation to the mother country. The Spanish Crown used these newfound riches to fund large armies and navies, which allowed Spain to colonize much of the Americas and bring war to European rivals. By the mid-sixteenth century, Spain was the most powerful nation in Europe, if not the world. It is unclear if the Arredondo family

¹⁴ Felipe Fernández-Armesto, “The Improbable Empire,” in *Spain: A History*, 127-128; Rangel, “La Familia Arredondo,” 16-19; Reglero, “El linaje de los Arredondos.” There is very little information on the Arredondo family line before 1500, but both Rangel and Reglero indicate that military service played an important part in the Arredondo family’s rise to prominence. The Arredondo mens’ membership in the Knights of Calatrava may indicate that their ancestors played important roles in the *Reconquista*.

played an important part in the conquest of the Americas or Spain's rise to dominance, but as members of the upper class, they doubtlessly benefited from their nation's prosperity.¹⁵

Spain's fortunes did not last long. Throughout the seventeenth century, the Spanish Crown devoted significant resources to religious wars with Protestant England and territorial wars with its northern neighbor, France. Although Spain emerged victorious in some of these conflicts, more often than not, the nation lost territory and influence to its European rivals. In part, aristocratic families like the Arredondos were to blame for Spain's misfortunes. Whereas men of merit had filled the nobility in medieval times, by the seventeenth century, their unaccomplished, less efficient, and more numerous descendants held power. This new generation found more interest in accumulating titles than military accomplishment. The Spanish monarchs still needed the armies the nobility commanded, so they handed out positions in government to unqualified aristocrats, thereby draining the national treasury and decreasing productivity. By the start of the eighteenth century, Spain was a power in decline, weighed down by a bloated, inefficient bureaucracy. Whether or not the Arredondos contributed to Spain's decline or were among the productive aristocracy is a matter of conjecture with present evidence.¹⁶

Regardless, the crown would look to the Arredondos to help solve Spain's woes in the eighteenth century. When enlightened Bourbon monarchs assumed the Spanish throne in

¹⁵ For the standard interpretation of Spain's economy in the sixteenth century, see Bernard Moses, "The Economic Condition of Spain in the Sixteenth Century," *Journal of Political Economy* 1 (September 1893): 513-534.

¹⁶ The reason for Spain's decline is the subject of much debate. For two of many articles on the subject, see John H. Elliott, "The Decline of Spain," *Past & Present* 20 (November 1961): 52-75 and J. I. Israel, "The Decline of Spain: A Historical Myth?," *Past & Present* 91 (May 1981): 170-180. See also, Elizabeth A. Leffeldt, "Ideal Men: Masculinity and Decline in Seventeenth-Century Spain," *Renaissance Quarterly* 61 (Summer 2008): 463-494. For a list of Arredondo men and their accomplishments, see Arredondo Genealogy, Pruebas de Caballeros, Caja 2006, Expediente 173 (Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid), hereafter cited as AHNM.

1713, they hoped to return Spain to prominence by modernizing and streamlining the national government. Among many other things, the Bourbon Reforms, as they would come to be called, attempted to consolidate power by reducing departments filled with inefficient aristocrats, into a single civil, military, and judicial authority. These Bourbon officials had to be loyal and were expected to reevaluate traditional ways of doing things, including the role of the nobility in Spanish society. Nicolás Arredondo, Joaquín Arredondo's father, would become one of the most successful Bourbon rulers in Spanish America.¹⁷

Nicolás Antonio de Arredondo, Pelegrin, Ahedo Zorilla de San Martín y Venero was born on April 17, 1726 in the small village of Bárcena de Cicero, on the northern coast of Spain. Nicolás's father was Nicolás Antonio de Arredondo y Ahedo de la Oveja, a Knight of the Order of Calatrava and the Order of Carlos III. His mother was María Teresa Antonia de Pelegrin y Venero, a member of the powerful and influential House of Pelegrin. Nicolás had one sister, María Antonia, and one brother, Manuel Antonio, a future Viceroy of Peru. Like many of his ancestors, Nicolás joined the military at an early age, serving in the Spanish Royal Guards. In the 1740s, he fought in the grueling Italian campaigns of the War of the Austrian Succession, where the young officer distinguished himself in battle and quickly rose in rank. Nicolás continued to prioritize his military career for two decades after returning from Italy. He would eventually earn the rank of Lieutenant General.¹⁸

It was not until he was nearly 50-years-old that don Nicolás decided to start a family, choosing doña Joséfa de Mioño as his bride. Nearly twenty years Nicolás's junior, Joséfa was

¹⁷ For a history of Bourbon Spain, see John Lynch, *Bourbon Spain, 1700-1808* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1989).

¹⁸ Vicente de Cadenas y Vicent, *Caballeros de la Orden de Calatrava que efectuaron sus pruebas de ingreso durante el siglo XVIII*, Tomo IV (Madrid: Instituto Salazar y Castro, 1987), 69-70; Gonzalo Demaría and Diego Molina de Castro, eds., *Historia genealógica de los virreyes del Río de la Plata* (Buenos Aires: Junta Sabatina de Especialidades Históricas, 2001), 123.

born on May 31, 1745, in the Arroyo de Las Fraugas region in the Guadalajara province of Spain. As a member of a distinguished noble family, doña Joséfa's full name is an exhaustive list of prominent Spanish families, a distinction that led one historian to refer to her as the "woman of twenty names." In addition to having notable ancestry, Joséfa was beautiful and wealthy. Indeed, the Mioños were one of the wealthiest families in northeastern Spain, a fact that would not have escaped Nicolás, who must have known that marriage to Joséfa would include a substantial dowry.¹⁹

Although marriage to doña Joséfa offered benefits, it had downsides. Doña Joséfa was spoiled, demanding, and had little tolerance for what she perceived as ineptitude. Like many in the eighteenth-century Spanish nobility, she reveled in the advantages of her social standing and demanded those of lower classes acknowledge her superiority. In one instance, for example, she humiliated and fired newly hired servants for a minor indiscretion. Another time, she refused to attend an event unless she received as much attention as the person being honored. Doña Joséfa could also be reclusive, often citing migraines as a reason to remain at home instead of attending public events with her family. In spite of these unflattering characteristics, she seems to have been a capable mother who cared for her loved ones. Because of this, her children would always look out for her wellbeing.²⁰

¹⁹ Vicente de Cadenas y Vicent, *Caballeros de la Orden de Calatrava*, 69-70; Demaría and Castro, *Historia genealógica de los virreyes del Río de la Plata*, 126-127. Joséfa's birthday may be a few days before the date given, as Cadenas y Vicent lists baptism dates, not birthdays.

²⁰ Demaría and Castro, *Historia genealógica de los virreyes del Río de la Plata*, 126-127. The authors referred to Joséfa as the "fickle lady viceroy" and said that while the Arredondos were in Argentina, she upset the women of upper class society. As an example of Joséfa's temper, the authors mentioned that the woman grew incensed that she was not included in a ceremony meant to honor her husband. It may be unfair to judge Joséfa from this four-year period in her life, but it would not be unreasonable to believe that a beautiful woman from the Spanish upper class was spoiled. For an example of Joaquín Arredondo speaking well of his mother, see Gaspar López to Viceroy, January 24, 1822, Departamento de Archivo Correspondencia e Historia Archivo de Cancelados,

Doña Joséfa and Nicolás wed on February 22, 1773, in Barcelona, where Nicolás was stationed at the time. The couple did not wait long to consummate their marriage, and if the frequency with which Joséfa gave birth to their children is any indication, they did their best to ensure the marriage stayed consummated. Joséfa gave birth to the couple's first child, Manuel, on February 2, 1774. A little over a year later, Joséfa delivered her second child, the subject of this work, Joaquín de Arredondo Pelegrin y Mioño. Joaquín was baptized on May 13, 1775 in the Iglesia Parroquial de San Pedro de las Puellas. Fourteen months later, Joséfa gave birth to another male, José. A fourth boy, Joséf, followed shortly thereafter.²¹

Joaquín and his three brothers spent their childhoods in Barcelona, a cosmopolitan city in the northeastern province of Catalonia. Sitting on the Mediterranean Sea just south of the French border, Barcelona's location made it a cultural and physical gateway to Spain. Travelers from Europe's interior passed through the town on their way to the Spanish capital in Madrid. Ships from exotic locales in Africa and the Near East filled Barcelona's docks. The Arredondos would have been among the first to see merchants arriving in Barcelona from the New World, as in 1778 the crown lifted a restriction excluding Barcelona from direct trade with Spanish America. As a member of the upper class with money to invest, Nicolás Arredondo likely profited from the increased trade. The Arredondo children also benefited. For example, chocolate, which had previously been a novelty item, was now readily available to anyone who could afford to visit one of the city's numerous chocolateers.²²

Legajo XI/111/3-103 (Archivo Histórico de la Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, México, D.F.) hereafter cited as SDN.

²¹ "Arredondo Genealogy" Pruebas de Caballeros; Demaría and Castro, *Historia genealógica de los virreyes Del Río de la Plata*, 132-134.

²² Raymond Carr, *Spain: 1808-1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966) 30-32. Barcelona's merchants responded to the end of prohibition of trade with the Americas by sending wine, textiles, and weapons to the New

In general, a sharp contrast between haves and have-nots divided Spanish society in the late eighteenth century. The nationalization of industries under the Bourbon Reforms and other eighteenth century economic changes had reduced the Spanish middle class substantially, leaving only those with money and those without. Owing to personal investments, Joséfa's dowry, the Arredondo family assets, and Nicolás's military pay, the Arredondos were among the wealthy. How wealthy is difficult to say with present evidence, but the family could afford to employ servants for each of their children. Joséfa had women to do her hair. Joaquín had two personal servants by the time he was a teenager. At the same time, thousands of homeless beggars clogged Barcelona's streets. Seeing this extreme divergence in wealth likely bestowed a sense of entitlement upon a young Joaquín Arredondo, as did constant reminders that he belonged to a noble family that was better than those without titles. Growing up, Joaquín learned that those among the lower class were his inferiors, a lesson he would carry into adulthood.²³

Seeing his father head off to war when he was four must also have influenced a young Joaquín. In June 1779, Spain joined France in declaring war on England. Although Spain was ostensibly helping England's American colonies gain their independence, the crown true aim in declaring war was to recover territory lost in earlier conflicts. The British-controlled Straits of Gibraltar in southern Iberia was a particularly enticing target, as Spain could regulate commerce into and out of the Mediterranean by possessing it. After receiving orders to assist a joint French-Spanish force in taking Gibraltar in 1779, don Nicolás left his family in Barcelona and

World. By 1792, exports out of Catalonia reached 56 million *reales*. For an excellent popular history of Barcelona, see Robert Hughes, *Barcelona*, (New York: Knopf: Distributed by Random House, 1992), 194-195.

²³ Hughes, *Barcelona*, 194-195; Arredondo Passport Approval, October 1, 1791, Secretaria de Guerra Legajo 6805, Exp. 50, (Archivo General de Simancas, Simancas), hereafter cited as AGS.

departed south. It is unclear what role the elder Arredondo played upon arriving in Gibraltar, but he likely served in one of the two royal guard artillery battalions bombarding the entrenched British garrisons. Although successful in limiting British access to the Mediterranean, the Spanish and French siege had yet to take Gibraltar by late 1780. At that point, don Nicolás received new orders: he was to proceed to the Americas, where he was to capture British West Florida.²⁴

It would be impossible to reconstruct don Nicolás's thoughts on his first journey across the Atlantic. Although he would be setting foot in Spanish America for the first time, he was certainly not the first member of the Arredondo family to do so—in fact, as Nicolás sailed, his brother Manuel was in the process of subduing an Indian rebellion in Peru. It can be assumed, however, that upon arriving in Cuba and later Florida, the foreignness of the New World must have offered the elder Arredondo pause, the vibrant flora and fauna of Cuba and Florida contrasting with the sterile Catalanian countryside. The temporary wooden structures of Florida could hardly have been more different from the stone architecture of Barcelona. Even the manner in which Americans fought their battles was strange. When don Nicolás and some 7,000 Spaniards laid siege to a British fort in Pensacola in 1781, they had to deal with the post's Indian allies attacking their supply lines. Rain bogged down troops. Mosquitoes pestered. In spite of these hardships, Spanish artillery units—possibly under the leadership of don Nicolás—moved from one redoubt to another until they reached a position from which they could fire

²⁴ Vicente O Cutolo, "Nicolás Arredondo," *Nuevo diccionario biográfico argentino*, Vol. I, (Buenos Aires: Elche, 1968), 369; Reglero, "El linaje de los Arredondos."

into the British fort, forcing its inhabitants to surrender. Victory in the Battle of Pensacola was welcome news in Spain, as the nation had grown used to defeat at the hands of the English.²⁵

Although little information is available on his activities in the battle, it seems that the elder Arredondo performed admirably as he received a promotion to military and political governor of Santiago de Cuba in 1781. It is unclear if the rest of the Arredondo family joined Nicolás in Cuba, but Joséfa's respite from childbearing may indicate that they did not. Don Nicolás would not have had much time for his family anyway. As a military man in charge of civilians, he had to confront the numerous economic, social, and political issues facing Santiago de Cuba in the implementation of the Bourbon Reforms. For example, don Nicolás had to issue paper money when faced with a shortage of hard currency, increase security upon hearing that African slaves were planning an insurrection, and implement measures to curtail contraband trading. The elder Arredondo even had to stand trial over accusations that he participated in contraband trade, an allegation that if proven to be true would end the Spaniard's long career. After a protracted trial, a court determined that two aldermen were the true perpetrators of the crime and cleared don Nicolás of all charges. This trial does not seem to have had negative

²⁵ Cutolo, "Nicolás Arredondo," 369. For more on the Spanish invasion of Florida, see J. Barton Starr, *Tories, Dons, and Rebels: The American Revolution in British West Florida* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1976). There are multiple published primary sources dealing with the Battle of Pensacola. None mention Nicolás Arredondo's role in the conflict. He may have been among a group of soldiers who arrived shortly before the battle commenced. See Maury Baker and Margaret Bissler Haas, "Bernardo de Gálvez's Combat Diary for the Battle of Pensacola, 1781," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 56 (October 1977): 176-199; Donald E. Worcester, "Miranda's Diary of the Siege of Pensacola, 1781," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 29 (January 1951): 163-196; and S.F. de Saavedra and Padrón F. Morales, *Journal of Don Francisco Saavedra De Sangronis during the Commission which He Had in His Charge from 25 June 1780 Until the 20th of the Same Month of 1783* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1988).

repercussions to the elder Arredondo's career, as in 1788, don Nicolás received a promotion to President of the Real Audiencia of Charcas, a governing body in modern-day Bolivia.²⁶

Before he could arrive in Bolivia to assume his new duties, news arrived that the king had assigned don Nicolás to an even more prominent position: Viceroy of Río de la Plata. As viceroy, Nicolás would be subordinate only to the King and would be responsible for military and civic matters in a Spanish territory made up of parts of present day Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia, and Chile. The Arredondo patriarch accepted the promotion, traveled to the capital of the Río de la Plata viceroyalty, Buenos Aires, and took office on December 4, 1789. Joséfa and the two youngest Arredondo children, Joséf and Agustín, joined him in Buenos Aires. Joaquín did not, as he had begun training at a military academy in Spain.²⁷

Although the Río de la Plata was large in terms of landmass, its sparse population, distance from Europe, and middling economy diminished the region's importance to Spain. Therefore, don Nicolás would have to manage the viceroyalty's myriad of problems with little assistance from the mother country. Demonstrating ingenuity and an understanding of Bourbon policy, the elder Arredondo instituted a series of reforms that improved the economy and living conditions of the Río de la Plata. To accommodate an expanded population, don Nicolás oversaw improvements in Buenos Aires's sewage system and paved the city's torpid, muddy streets. To prevent theft, don Nicolás installed a police force to patrol the capital at night. The viceroy was particularly effective in bringing the Río de la Plata into the world

²⁶ Cutolo, "Nicolás Arredondo," 369. For the most comprehensive treatment of Nicolás Arredondo's time as governor in Cuba see, Juan Bosco Amores, *Cuba en la época de Ezpeleta, 1785-1790* (Pamplona [Spain]: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 2000), 155, 229, 265-266, 294. See also Willis Fletcher Johnson, *The History of Cuba* (New York: B. F. Buck and Company, Inc., 1920), 167-168.

²⁷ Demaría and Castro, *Historia genealógica de los virreyes del Río de la Plata*, 124. For an overview of don Nicolás responsibilities as viceroy, see John Lynch, *Spanish Colonial Administration, 1782-1810: The Intendant System in the Viceroyalty of the Río De La Plata* (London: University of London, Athlone Press, 1958).

economy by increasing productivity of the region's livestock and leather goods industries.

Realizing that contrabanders illegally sold cattle to Portuguese merchants in neighboring Brazil, rustlers stole from herds, and many ranchers did not pay taxes, don Nicolás implemented harsh punishments for contrabanding and rustling and required all ranchers to get licenses and brands in order to sell cattle. The new viceroy also hired cattle inspectors to curb the spread of disease between herds.²⁸

Although these measures were effective, the cattlemen of the Río de la Plata faced another problem: nomadic mounted Indians of the South American Pampas were attacking their ranches and absconding with livestock, trade goods, and human captives. Indians had been particularly aggressive in recent years, with the people of the frontier being "in the greatest distress, many crying for the loss of their families, for the captivity of others, and most of them for the destruction and pillaging of their haciendas." Because of this, few wanted to risk their lives and livelihood by expanding their herding range deeper into the Pampas.²⁹

Don Nicolás needed to stop the Indian attacks to grow the Río de la Plata economy and bring stability, but he lacked the soldiers and resources needed to launch a prolonged campaign into the Pampas to punish the tribes. With no help coming from Spain, the viceroy improvised.

²⁸ Demaría and Castro, *Historia genealógica de los virreyes del Río de la Plata*, 124; Lyman L. Johnson, *Workshop of Revolution: Plebeian Buenos Aires and the Atlantic World, 1776-1810* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 25, 29, 155; Héctor José Tanzi, "El Río de la Plata en la época de los Virreyes Loreto y Arredondo (1784-1794)," *Revista de Historia de América*, 83 (January-June 1977), 170; Vicente Dionisio Sierra, *Historia de la Argentina: fin del régimen de gobiernos y creación del virreinato del río de la Plata, 1700-1800* (Buenos Aires: Union de Editores Latinos, 1959), 502-503. For Don Nicolás's account of his time as viceroy, see Nicolás de Arredondo, *Informe del Virey D. Nicolás de Arredondo a su sucesor D. Pedro Melo de Portugal y Villena: sobre el estado de la cuestión de límites entre las cortes de España y Portugal, en 1795* (Buenos Aires: Impr. del Estado, 1836); Nicolás noted in his memoirs that in spite of his best efforts a number of Buenos Aires's streets remained unpaved. For more on Arredondo's civic projects, see John Lynch, "Intendants and Cabildos in the Viceroyalty of La Plata, 1782-1810," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 35 (August 1955): 337-362.

²⁹ Alfred J. Tapson, "Indian Warfare on the Pampa during the Colonial Period," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 42 (February 1962): 1; David J. Weber, *Bárbaros: Spaniards and their Savages in the Age of Enlightenment* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 64-68, 166 (quotation on page 68).

Noting, “you do not have to be only on the defensive, but ready to set out on a sortie to annihilate them on the battlefield,” don Nicolás stocked frontier forts with malcontents snatched off the streets of Buenos Aires. This left more-experienced cavalymen to pursue Indians in small-scale punitive sorties, which forced Indians to sue for peace. Owing to the effectiveness of this policy, Indian raids slowed during don Nicolás time as viceroy, which, in turn, allowed the cattle industry and the Río de la Plata economy to thrive.³⁰

Although Indians could hurt the prosperity of don Nicolás’s viceroyalty, they were little threat to Spain’s long-term control of the Río de la Plata. The Portuguese were. Portugal, Spain’s rival on the Iberian Peninsula, had established a New World colony in Brazil, which bordered the Río de la Plata to the northeast. Prior to Viceroy Arredondo’s reign, the Portuguese had respected a treaty stipulating that the Paraguay River was the border between the two European powers. In 1791, however, don Nicolás received reports that well-armed Portuguese colonists had not only settled west of the Paraguay River, but were buying the loyalty of local Indians with trade goods.³¹

The Portuguese incursion proved to be a dilemma to don Nicolás. He lacked the funds, manpower, and authority to start a war with Portugal, meaning that an attack on the Portuguese settlement was out of the question. The viceroy could, however, take measures to ensure that the Portuguese proceeded no further into his territory. With this in mind, he assembled a cadre of armed men and ordered them to construct a fort opposite that of the Portuguese. In case Portugal took this as an act of war or decided to invade for an unrelated

³⁰Weber, *Bárbaros*, 64-68, 166 (quotation on page 166). Tapson, “Indian Warfare on the Pampa,” 19-21; Jones, “Comparative Raiding Economies: North and South,” 105. For more on the similarities between North and South American plains tribes, see Richard W. Slatta, *Comparing Cowboys and Frontiers* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 52-73.

³¹Ysabel F. Rennie, *The Argentine Republic* (New York: Macmillan, 1945), 411-414, 587-588.

reason, don Nicolás fortified the city of Montevideo, which stood between Brazil and Buenos Aires. Don Nicolás knew that these measures would only hold off the Portuguese for so long, as Brazil had seen an economic and demographic expansion in recent years. Its population would continue to grow and trespass on Spanish lands unless the viceroy could populate the disputed region with subjects loyal to Spain. Unfortunately for don Nicolás, he was unable to find such settlers during his time as viceroy, leaving the problem for future generations.³²

Although economics, Indians, and the Portuguese occupied much of the viceroy's attention, the onset of the French Revolution was perhaps his most pressing concern. Across the ocean in Europe, the ideas of Voltaire, John Locke, Rousseau, and other Enlightenment thinkers had changed the way many perceived the purpose of government. Instead of blind adherence to a monarchy, radicals began calling for representative governments that respected certain civil rights. Such thoughts encouraged England's American colonies to revolt against their mother country in 1775. Similar sentiments stirred in France, and in 1789, liberal reformers, anarchists, constitutional monarchists and others dissatisfied with the status quo rose up against the French king, beginning a bloody ten year period known as the French Revolution. Violent unrest stormed through the countryside and by 1792, not only had the French rid themselves of their own king, but France's revolutionary government went further and declared war on all European monarchies.³³

The ideas of the French Revolution soon found their way across the Atlantic to the French Caribbean sugar colony of Haiti, where free people of African descent overthrew the

³² Rennie, *The Argentine Republic*, 411-414, 587-588.

³³ For a history of the French Revolution, see William F. Doyle, *The Oxford History of the French Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

island's white ruling class in the name of Enlightenment principles. Word of the revolution soon filtered down to Haiti's majority slave population, and in 1791, they rose up in violent revolt against their slave masters. By 1793, slaves controlled much of the Haitian countryside. News of the successes of the Haitian and French revolutions traveled throughout Spanish America, inciting fear in colonial leaders who ruled over enslaved and dissatisfied populations.³⁴

Don Nicolás was not immune to such fears. Throughout the Río de la Plata, saloons filled with talk of the French Revolution and Enlightenment literature passed openly between interested parties. Pamphlets lampooning don Nicolás and the monarchy appeared on public walls, as did graffiti proclaiming "Viva la Libertad." Of more salience to the Arredondo patriarch, Buenos Aires's sizable slave population, having learned of the Haitian Revolution, became aggressive and belligerent towards their masters. Viewing don Nicolás and the Spanish government incapable of halting a slave rebellion should one occur, the Río de la Plata's white population purchased ammunition and firearms to defend themselves in case of a slave uprising. This left don Nicolás to deal with not only a potential slave revolt, but also a possible insurrection of the dissatisfied white populace.³⁵

The viceroy responded to the situation with an aggressive anti-revolutionary campaign meant to root out insurrectionists and restore confidence in his authority. Referring to France and anti-monarchists as "the seductor nation and its proselytes," don Nicolás dispatched military personnel with orders to roam the streets of Buenos Aires, break up public celebrations, confiscate anti-royalist books and pamphlets, and investigate rumors of

³⁴ For a history of the Haitian Revolution, see Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2004).

³⁵ Johnson, *Workshop of Revolution*, 154-158. For an analysis of colonial response to the Haitian Revolution, see Sara E. Johnson, *The Fear of French Negroes: Transcolonial Collaboration in the Revolutionary Americas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

revolutionary activity. The viceroy allowed his men substantial latitude in carrying out their orders. After discovering a slave trying to purchase firearms, investigators wrapped ropes around the man's arms and asked him to give up his coconspirators. When the slave refused to do so, the officials used a wench to tighten the ropes, eventually dislocating the man's arms from their sockets. An Italian in possession of revolutionary literature had steel blades driven under his fingernails. Viceroy Arredondo even approved three searches of the home of wealthy aristocrat and future Río de la Plata viceroy Santiago de Liniers. Although the searches yielded nothing, they showed that don Nicolás was willing to upset the privileged class if it meant sustaining royalist rule. The elder Arredondo's measures, although cruel, proved effective, as there were no uprisings in the Río de la Plata during his time as viceroy.³⁶

Don Nicolás likely shared the knowledge he used to maintain peace with his son Joaquín when the boy came to visit him in Buenos Aires in 1791. After receiving permission to take leave from military service, the sixteen-year-old Joaquín and two servants departed from the La Coruña port in northwestern Spain and arrived in Buenos Aires shortly thereafter. Although neither of the Arredondo men wrote of the visit, Joaquín's actions later in life demonstrate that he learned much from his father. While walking with his father on Buenos Aires's recently paved streets, Joaquín must have realized that improvements in public works increased productivity and prevented the spread of disease. His father's lessons on how to deal with Indians and foreign invaders must have struck a chord with the young Joaquín, as he would deal with his own Indians and foreigners in much the same manner. Don Nicolás's tirade against enemies to the crown also resonated, for the perceptive Joaquín would hold comparable views

³⁶ Johnson, *Workshop of Revolution*, 80, 154-158, 168, 171-172, 174 (quotation on page 154).

when dealing with rebellion in New Spain. Indeed, the similarities between the problems don Nicolás faced as viceroy and those his son would encounter twenty years later in a similar office are legion. That don Joaquín would approach his office in a similar manner to his father shows the great degree of influence that the elder Arredondo had on his son.³⁷

After Joaquín left the Río de la Plata, he returned to life as a cadet in the Spanish Royal Guards. In general, the Spanish army in the eighteenth century was a mess due to poor administration, improper funding, bureaucratic over-management, and a failure to keep military matters separate from political and social matters. This latter tendency—in which Spain based the army's chain of command more on feudal social lines than merit—especially plagued the guard corps. King Felipe V had initially formed the Royal Guards in 1702 as an elite military organization that served at the behest of the Crown. By the time Joaquín entered the guards in 1787, however, service in the guards had lost much of its luster. Over the past 85 years, upper-class youths, looking for an easy way to rise in social stature, had replaced men of merit and military prowess in the ranks of the guards. The situation worsened after the French Royal Guards turned against their king during the French Revolution. To prevent such a thing from happening in Spain, King Charles IV lavished his guards with undeserved pay increases and

³⁷ Arredondo Passport Approval, October 1, 1791. Another possible influence on the young Arredondo was his uncle Manuel Antonio. Don Manuel, like Nicolás, entered into the military early in life. At a young age he was sent to serve in Peru, where he helped quell the Indian uprising of Tupac Amaru. Don Manuel also participated in Amaru's trial, which resulted in a guilty conviction. He remained in Peru for the next decade serving in various administrative positions. In 1801, he temporarily assumed the position of viceroy, although he held the position for less than a year. With present evidence it is unclear what relationship the young Joaquín had with his father's brother, or if don Manuel had any role in his nephew's character formation.

privileges, leaving the military unit “ill-trained,” “slovenly,” and as one observer noted a “pacific phalanx of pure ostentation.”³⁸

Joaquín had entered the Tercer Regimiento of the Guardias de Infantería division of the Royal Guards in 1787 at the age of twelve, a normal age for the children of nobles to enter the military. As a cadet, Arredondo probably studied arithmetic and grammar. If the rambling, run-on-sentences littering his later-life correspondence are any indication, he did not score well in the latter subject. The young cadet also attended classes on battle tactics, qualified in the use of modern weapons, and learned the history of the Spanish military. Although training to become an infantry officer, Arredondo also learned about artillery warfare, something that would prove valuable later in life. It is unclear which of Spain’s five military colleges Arredondo initially attended, but he would have completed his training in the city of Zamora, as Spain’s infamous Prime Minister Manuel Godoy had reduced the nation’s five colleges to just the Zamora location by 1790.³⁹

Cadet Joaquín’s first opportunity to demonstrate his military training came in 1793 in a conflict known as the War of the Pyrenees. After the French revolutionary government declared war on monarchical Spain, Spain responded by sending armies into the French controlled

³⁸ Charles J. Esdaile, *The Spanish Army in the Peninsular War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 18-19, 59; XXIV (quotation on page 19); Charles Oman, *A History of the Peninsular War* (London: Greenhill Books, 2004), 100. The quotation in Esdaile refers to the Guardias de Corps section of the Royal Guards, but the whole guard corps was considered corrupt and inefficient at this time. There is very little historical work done on the Spanish Royal Guards. For more on the Spanish army in general, however, see Ronald Fraser, *Napoleon’s Cursed War: Spanish Popular Resistance in the Peninsular War, 1808-1814* (New York: Verso, 2008).

³⁹ Esdaile, *The Spanish Army in the Peninsular War*, 59; Oman, *A History of the Peninsular War*, 100. At the time of Arredondo’s entry into the Royal Guards, the Guardias de Infantería were divided into two regiments; one made up of Spaniards, one made up of Walloons. Owing to lack of Walloons, Manuel Godoy combined the two regiments in 1803. Godoy believed that the Spanish army had become a breeding ground for pretension and he hoped that he could more-easily control the curriculum of just one college. Godoy’s aversion to the military was far-reaching, but in particular he found the officers of Arredondo’s Guardias de Infantería to be the “worst in the army.”

portion of the Pyrenees Mountains, which historically had served as a border between the two nations. From 1793 to 1795, Spain and France engaged in infrequent, but brutal combat in the Pyrenees. The war, however, was just as much about propaganda, with both France and Spain using literature that exalted their respective sides and vilified the other in an attempt to win the loyalty of the residents of the Pyrenees. When the combatants grew exhausted from the fighting and the propaganda battles, they agreed to a tenuous peace in 1795.⁴⁰

With available sources, it is impossible to determine young Joaquín's role in the War of the Pyrenees. From his future actions, however, it is apparent that the cadet learned much from the intense, calculated style of war employed by both Spain and the France. He also saw the value of propaganda in war. Arredondo must have served honorably in the conflict—or at least not been noticeably cowardly—because by 1796, he had shed his cadet moniker and achieved the rank of Second Lieutenant. Now an officer, Arredondo returned to Barcelona after the war, where he remained until 1798.⁴¹

Service as a cadet was not the only qualification for becoming an officer in the Royal Guards; an officer must also be of noble birth and *limpieza de sangre*, of clean blood. The first requirement owed to the Spanish belief that leadership ability passed through the generations, meaning the descendants of great nobles would themselves be great. The *limpieza de sangre* requirement was meant to filter out those with Moorish or Jewish ancestry, a racist byproduct of the eight century long Reconquista. To prove Joaquín's noble lineage and *limpieza de sangre*, then, in 1796, a royal official interviewed family members and associates about Joaquín's

⁴⁰ Arredondo Geneology, Pruebas de Caballeros; Peter Sahlins, *Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 176-178, 183, 186.

⁴¹ Sahlins, *Boundaries*, 183; Arredondo Geneology, Pruebas de Caballeros.

baptism, birthplace, and early life. The interviewee asked similar questions about Joaquín's parents and grandparents. After collecting over 100 pages of background information, the royal official determined that Arredondo was indeed noble, allowing Joaquín to adopt the title "don."⁴²

Arredondo had to go through a similar procedure to become a knight in the Order of Calatrava, a military order originally reserved for warriors who had distinguished themselves in the *Reconquista*. Following the expulsion of the Moors, the military relevance of the order diminished, but the title "Knight of the Order of Calatrava" still held influence among the Spanish upper class. Membership also included a financial stipend. In order for Joaquín to receive the title and stipend, relatives and associates once again had to answer questions concerning heredity and legitimacy. After the Calatrava official, like the nobility-fact-checker before him, determined that Arredondo was of legitimate birth, King Charles IV approved Joaquín's knighthood on July 21, 1796. The following September, he was officially knighted in a solemn ceremony in either the San Benito or San Bernardo monastery in Barcelona.⁴³

Why did Arredondo pursue seemingly meaningless titles? In Spanish society, titles were "proof of family *nobleza* and *limpieza de sangre*, and a first major step up the ladder of the Castilian noble hierarchy; an identification, in fact, of oneself and one's family with those aristocratic and chivalric concepts which custom, rather than law, rendered obligatory for the

⁴² Arredondo Geneology, Pruebas de Caballeros. By the end of the eighteenth century, the idea of nobility had lost much of its prestige. By 1800, 5 percent of Spain could claim to be a noble. See, *The New Cambridge Modern History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), 274.

⁴³ L. P. Wright, "The Military Orders in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Spanish Society: The Institutional Embodiment of a Historical Tradition," *Past & Present* 43 (May 1969): 34-35, 39-40, 51; Arredondo Geneology, Pruebas de Caballeros; Carlos IV to Joaquín Arredondo, July 21, 1796, Calatrava Expedientillos Expediente # 12466, (AHNM); Cadenas y Vicente, *Caballeros de la Orden de Calatrava*, 69. In what appears to be a time saving measure, the fact-checker also researched Arredondo's brother José's at the same time in 1796.

hidalgo class.” In other words, titles were to “conserve the Spanish aristocracy, to keep unsullied the purity of noble families, to give honour to persons who merit it, to distinguish the illustrious from the common herd, the noble from the base.” Titles also helped advance military careers. For these reasons, don Joaquín ensured that all of his communication contained a lengthy list of his titles, something that would prove to be an annoyance to the various scribes and printers who would find themselves in Arredondo’s employ.⁴⁴

Titles could also help when looking for a wife. While serving in Barcelona, Arredondo met an eighteen-year-old woman named María Antonio Lleo y Villaren and the two engaged to wed. In order to go through with the marriage, Arredondo had to gain approval from María’s family. He did, likely making note of his many titles when doing so. María had to confirm the validity of her *limpieza de sangre* in the same bureaucratic manner in which Arredondo had entered the nobility. When the search of her family line confirmed that María was, in fact, legitimate, the couple wed on May 24, 1798. They had one daughter on June 17 of the next year, whom they named Joaquína after her father. The personal and private details of don Joaquín and María’s relationship are scarce owing to the bureaucratic nature of available sources.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Wright, “The Military Orders in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Spanish Society,” 39-40, 51 (quotations on page 40). For an example of Arredondo using a lengthy title see, “Arredondo Proclamation,” June 18, 1820, Church in Mexico Collection (Benson Latin American Collection, Austin), hereafter cited as BLAC. For example, all of Arredondo’s printed proclamations later in life began with this lengthy introduction: “D JOAQUÍN DE ARREDONDO MIOÑO PELEGRIN BRAVO DE HOYOS Y VENERO, CABALLERO DE LA ORDEN DE CALATRAVA, BRIGADIER DE LOS EJERCICIOS NACIONALES, GOBERNADOR, COMANDANTE GENERAL Y GEFE SUPERIOR POLITICO. DE LAS QUATRO PROVINCIAS INTERNAS DE ORIENTE EN ESTA AMERICA SEPTENTRIONAL, GENERAL EN GEFE DEL DE OPERACIÓN EN ELLAS, SUB INSPECTOR DE SUS TROPAS, Y SUB DELGADO GENERAL DE CORREOS EN LAS MISMAS, &c. &c.”

⁴⁵ Joséf Caballero to Secretaio del Supremio Consejo de la Guerra, February 28, 1803, Legajo #2463 Joaquín de Arredondo File, Archivo General Militar de Segovia, Segovia), hereafter cited as AGMS.

In 1801, Arredondo had to put family life aside when he and the Royal Guards participated in a brief affair known as the War of the Oranges, a proxy conflict in the larger War of the Second Coalition. The War of the Oranges began when France, now under the rule of a charismatic young general named Napoleon Bonaparte, attempted to force Portugal into surrendering its national sovereignty. Hoping to use the conflict to grab Portuguese territory, the Spanish allied with France and invaded Portugal in May 1801. Within a month of Spain's entry into the war, the overmatched Portugal surrendered and ceded a portion of its territory to its eastern neighbor. Sources say only that Arredondo participated in the invasion of Portugal and that he remained in conquered territory until 1802.⁴⁶

Later in 1802, the young officer received new orders: he was to depart for the Spanish American colony of New Spain. Encompassing today's Mexico, Central America, and the United States Southwest, New Spain was Spain's most profitable New World colony. It had come under Spanish control in the sixteenth century following Hernando Cortés's brutal conquest of the Aztec Empire in 1521. After Cortés's victory, the Spanish subdued surrounding Indians, their military efforts aided by European diseases, which claimed the lives of some 80 percent of the New World's inhabitants. The Spanish then forced the surviving Indians to labor in New Spain's many silver mines for the financial benefit of their home country. Indians became the working proletariat; the Spaniards their bourgeois masters.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Frederick C. Schneid, *Napoleon's Conquest of Europe: The War of the Third Coalition* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2005), 23-25; Joaquín de Arredondo Service Record, Departamento de Archivo Correspondencia e Historia Archivo de Cancelados, Exp. XI/111/3-103, SDN. This file contains multiple service records for Arredondo. Sources disagree on when Arredondo departed for and arrived in the New World. I defer to the service records, but it is possible that Arredondo remained in Spain from 1802 to 1808, as there is very little information on Arredondo from 1802-1808.

⁴⁷ Arredondo Service Record. For more on the treatment of Indians in New Spain, see Lesley Byrd Simpson, *The Encomienda in New Spain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1950).

In many ways, the social and racial hierarchy of New Spain changed little over the 300 years from Cortés's conquest of the Aztecs to Arredondo's arrival in 1803. In general, social status and racial status in New Spain were analogous, with nationality and degree of whiteness—or *limpieza de sangre*—largely determining a person's place in society. Light-skinned people from the Iberian Peninsula, or *peninsulares*, remained at the top of this social order. They held more wealth and representation in public offices, with the crown reserving many government positions exclusively for peninsulares. Owing to his Iberian birth and white skin, don Joaquín immediately joined this privileged peninsular class when he set foot in New Spain in 1803. It was an exclusive club, as there were only some 15,000 peninsulares in New Spain's population of six million.⁴⁸

Persons of Spanish lineage not born in Iberia made up the next rung of New Spain's social order. Known as *criollos*, this group comprised approximately one-sixth of New Spain's population and were New Spain's middle class. They served as merchants, hacienda owners, manufacturers, and skilled laborers. Political reforms meant to retain power in Spain, however, denied Criollos access to many positions of power in the colonial government. These restrictions on political and social mobility, Enlightenment idealism, and the influence of the United States and French revolutions caused criollo elites to resent peninsulares like

⁴⁸ Magnus Mörner, *Race Mixture in the History of Latin America* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967), 54-62; D. A. Brading, "Government and Elite in Late Colonial Mexico," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 53 (August 1973): 397. Historians disagree as to the population and demographics of New Spain in the early nineteenth century. I use the numbers provided by Eric Van Young in *The Other Rebellion: Popular Violence, Ideology, and the Mexican Struggle for Independence, 1810-1821* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 46-47. Van Young's numbers are for 1810, not 1803, but they were likely comparable.

Arredondo. Some criollos even entertained the idea of severing ties with the mother country through their own revolution.⁴⁹

One thing preventing criollos from taking action was fear of race war. Following the conquest of New Spain, the Spanish implemented a racist system that marginalized those with Indian and African ancestry. In general, Spain exploited the labor of non-whites and excluded such persons from politics or entry into the upper class. Although some *mestizos*—persons of mixed Spanish-Indian origin—could sometimes elevate their social status, most non-Europeans were limited to lives of manual labor and debt peonage with little hope of education, property ownership, or social betterment. Because of this, resentment festered among many of New Spain’s five million Indians and Mestizos, not just toward the Spanish government, but whites, be they criollo or peninsular.⁵⁰

When Arredondo arrived in New Spain in 1803, however, colonial leadership feared external threats more than internal ones. Although there was a brief cessation of hostilities in Europe, Spain knew that it would not be long before war came again. When it did, the Spanish feared that England would use its navy to assault the port of Veracruz, through which most of New Spain’s exports and imports passed. Assigned to the Regimiento Fijo de Infanteria de Veracruz, it would be Arredondo’s responsibility to defend against such an attack.⁵¹

Interestingly, the Regimiento Fijo de Infanteria de Veracruz did not live in its namesake city and instead called the nearby city Tehuacán home. This likely owed to Veracruz’s reputation for yellow fever epidemics. During summers, disease propagated in the hot, humid

⁴⁹ Brading, “Government and Elite in Late Colonial Mexico,” 397, 403.

⁵⁰ Mörner, *Race Mixture in the History of Latin America*, 22-23, 53-55, 58-62, 41-42.

⁵¹ Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820, Departamento de Archivo Correspondencia E Historia Archivo de Cancelados, Expediente Num. XI/111/3-103, SDN.

coastal city, claiming the lives of those unaccustomed to the insalubrious environment. In 1799, nearly one quarter of the some 4,000 soldiers stationed in Veracruz died of yellow fever. An even worse yellow fever epidemic hit Veracruz in 1802 when a flood disinterred recently buried disease victims and deposited their infected bodies into city streets. Located at a higher elevation in the much more temperate province of Puebla, Tehuacán was much friendlier and less deadly to Spaniards like don Joaquín.⁵²

Although there are no memoirs of Arredondo's time in Tehuacán, he would have been responsible for instilling discipline and maintaining readiness in case of invasion. Whether he actually performed his duties or not is unclear, as the Spanish army in New Spain was just as disorganized, if not more so, than its peninsula counterpart. Contributing to the disorder, corrupt officers in New Spain pocketed portions of their soldiers' salaries, created "ghost" soldiers for extra pay, forced subordinates do their work for them, and bribed their way to promotions. Taking advantage of a system that allowed officers to request a jury of military peers, Spanish officers stole, raped, and sometimes killed knowing that there was little chance their fellow soldiers would convict them of their crimes. Due to limited sources, any speculation that don Joaquín participated in such activities would be irresponsible, as would a blanket statement saying that Arredondo was an excellent officer. The only note on don Joaquín's

⁵² José Clemente Sanchez to Salvador José de Benevides, June 21, 1809, Joaquín de Arredondo File, Legajo #2463, AGMS; Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820; Arredondo Service Record; Andrew L. Knaut, "Yellow Fever and the Late Colonial Public Health Response in the Port of Veracruz," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 77 (November 1997), 626-627. Arredondo's time in Puebla may have had a profound effect on his later career. While in the province, he likely witnessed a constant power struggle between the region's military leaders and local religious and civil officials. Each side used a combination of ritual and political means to degrade their rivals. Don Joaquín employed similar measures to those used by military leaders in Puebla when he later gained power. For more on politics in Puebla, see Frances L. Ramos, *Identity, Ritual, and Power in Colonial Puebla* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2012), 175-190.

service record during this time states that the Spaniard received a promotion to colonel in 1810.⁵³

There is also little information on Arredondo's personal life from 1802 to 1810. What is known is that don Joaquín's wife María joined him in Tehuacán at some point and that she died of unknown circumstances on November 30, 1808. Arredondo interred María in the local church where she was given the saint's sacraments. Apparently, her dowry reverted to her family, leaving nothing to Arredondo or the couple's daughter, Joaquína. Such arrangements were common in Spanish society.⁵⁴

Don Joaquín did not spend much time mourning his dead wife; he was preparing to remarry less than six months later. The object of his affection was an eighteen-year-old criollo woman, María Guadalupe del Moral. It is unclear how their relationship began, but Arredondo likely met María through her father, Manuel de Moral y Serpa, Captain del Regimiento Ynfanterias Provincial de las tres Villas. María was beautiful, healthy, of good lineage, and educated in politics and Christianity. Perhaps more important to Arredondo, María was wealthy—the Moral family owned multiple homes and was worth thousands of pesos. Some of this wealth would be included in a dowry when the couple married. Perhaps owing to the tough financial bargaining that often preceded marriages in Spanish society, it took more than six months from Manuel's consent to marriage before the wedding could take place. The couple

⁵³ David A Clary, *Eagles and Empire: the United States, Mexico, and the Struggle for a Continent* (New York: Bantam Dell, 2009), 13-14; Arredondo Service Record. For more on the Spanish army in New Spain, see Christon I. Archer, "The Army of New Spain and the Wars of Independence, 1790-1821," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 61 (November 1981): 705-714.

⁵⁴ Miguel Sanchez de la Guerra Cura to José Benavides, June 2, 1809, Joaquín de Arredondo File, Legajo #2463, (AGMS); Asunción Lavrin and Edith Couturier, "Dowries and Wills: A View of Women's Socioeconomic Role in Colonial Guadalajara and Puebla, 1640-1790," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 59 (May 1979) : 284, 286.

wed in Acuncion, New Spain on December 31, 1809. At thirty-five-years-old, Arredondo now had a beautiful young wife, wealth, and a promising career.⁵⁵

The Joaquín Arredondo that emerged from that church in Acuncion was a product of his upbringing and environment. Like many Spanish aristocrats, he flaunted undeserved titles and used gregarious self-promotion in pursuit of wealth, prestige, respect, and honor. Like his mother, he could be passionate, violent, and disobedient, especially when someone threatened his authority or questioned his honor. A childhood in a cosmopolitan city and extensive travel had made don Joaquín cultured, although he certainly believed his own culture superior to others. Indeed, Arredondo's belief in the Spanish traditions that had brought him prosperity may have blinded him to a greater understanding of the world.

When it came to leadership, Arredondo resembled his father, Nicolás. Both were pragmatists who preferred careful preparation and calculation to reckless abandon. Like Nicolás, don Joaquín understood that violence could solve some problems, but not all. Both men demanded devotion, courage, and respect from their inferiors and were quick to offer rewards and praise for those displaying these characteristics. Upon witnessing a subordinate act in manner that did not conform to their definition of honor, the Arredondo men had little issue administering harsh punishments. Like his father, Joaquín was a devout royalist. Although

⁵⁵ Joaquín de Arredondo to Viceroy, June 22, 1809, Arredondo File, Legajo #2463, AGMS; Don Miguel Sanchez de la Guerra Cura to José Benavides June 2, 1809, Arredondo File Legajo #2463, AGMS; Testimony of Baptism of Maria Guadalupe Undated, Arredondo File, Legajo #2463, AGMS; Manuel del Moral to José Clemente Sanchez June 22, 1809, Arredondo File, Legajo #2463; AGMS; Bennassar, *The Spanish Character*, 183; "Arredondo Marriage," Family Search, <https://www.familysearch.org/search/recordDetails/show?uri=https://api.familysearch.org/records/pal:/MM9.1.r/9MKS-C6G/p4> accessed on August 17, 2011. For an excellent summary of dowries in Spanish history, see Lavrin and Couturier, "Dowries and Wills," 282-286.

the Arredondo men did not always agree with the crown's judgment, they were willing to defend the monarchy with their lives.⁵⁶

Unlike his father, don Joaquín was prone to bouts of cruelty and juvenility. He would come to do "bad" things. Indeed, the people of New Spain would come to remember the man for committing malicious pranks, womanizing, disrespecting the church, advocating torture, and executing prisoners. Why did he do these things? In some instances, Arredondo could be cruel as a means of performing his duties. For example, he endorsed execution because it sent a message and disposed of prisoners. He authorized torture because he saw it as an effective means of procuring information. Yet duty cannot explain all of Arredondo's "bad" actions. Indeed, some historical accounts portray don Joaquín as someone who derived pleasure from other's discomfort. If true, this personality trait may have been a reaction to achieving success at a young age or a product of a genetic tic.

Although historical documents allow for supposition on Arredondo's personality, they are surprisingly devoid of information on the man's physical appearance, which is particularly frustrating because there are no surviving portraits of the man. The few available physical descriptions of Arredondo portray him as a man of average height and light complexion. According to one observer, his aristocratic upbringing and love of the finer things in life showed around his waist. Although he seems to have been "fleshy," he was not fat or unattractive. Indeed, one source described him as "good looking." He may also have worn an eye patch, as at some point, he had developed a cataract over one of his eyes. It is unclear how far the condition had advanced by 1810, but if the young officer were blind in one eye, it did not affect

⁵⁶ Bennassar, *The Spanish Character*, 15-17.

his battlefield performance. In addition, although his enemies would use the physical deformation as an insult, the condition does not seem to have bothered don Joaquín.⁵⁷

In spite of his many faults, Arredondo's father, don Nicolás, was proud of the man he had raised. After turning over control of the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata on March 16, 1795, the Arredondo patriarch, Joséfa, and their two youngest children returned to Spain. Shortly thereafter, don Nicolás was named to the prestigious position of president of the Royal Audiencia de Valencia and Captain General of Valencia and Murcia. In 1801, the 76 year old moved to Madrid where he served as head of the army of Castilla la Nueva. He would not hold this office for long, as he passed away on April 4, 1802. The Spanish government gave Joséfa an annual pension of 800 pesos for don Nicolás's loyal service to the Crown.⁵⁸

⁵⁷Arredondo Service Record; Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar, *The Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar*, Vol. 6, Charles Adam Gulick, Jr. and Katherine Elliott eds. (New York: AMS Press, 1973), 338.

⁵⁸Demaría and Castro, *Historia Genealógica de los Virreyes del Río de la Plata*, 124-125, 133.

CHAPTER 3

THE CONQUEST OF NUEVO SANTANDER, 1810-1812

Punish cowardice and wickedness; reward bravery and virtue.

Joaquín de Arredondo

On September 16, 1810, Spanish priest Miguel Hidalgo called on the people of New Spain to gather arms and overthrow their illegitimate government. Hidalgo's cry resonated with the colony's oppressed peasant class and within months, an army of insurgents stood at the gates of New Spain's capital, Mexico City. Thus began the Mexican War for Independence and Arredondo's rise from an unknown officer to one of the most powerful men in the Americas.

The origins of the Mexican War for Independence lay in Europe. Following the end of the French Revolution, an enigmatic officer in the French army named Napoleon Bonaparte assumed control of his nation's government, and in 1804, he launched a decade long war that would involve most of Europe and forever change Spain and Spanish America. In 1807, Spanish King Charles IV entered into a treaty with Napoleon allowing French forces to cross Spain in order to invade Portugal. In February 1808, Napoleon, with his armies entrenched in Iberia, turned on his Spanish allies and ordered his forces to capture the Spanish capital of Madrid. With the French closing in, disgruntled nobles and dissidents pressured Charles IV into abdicating his throne and making his son Ferdinand VII king. The people of Spain hoped that the more competent Ferdinand could defeat the French and restore legitimacy to the Spanish crown. Instead, Ferdinand's reign lasted a month. When it became clear that French forces

would take Madrid, Ferdinand surrendered to Napoleon and went into exile in France.

Napoleon then placed his brother Joséph Bonaparte on the Spanish throne.⁵⁹

With Ferdinand in France, there was no clear ruler of Spain. In name, Joséph Bonaparte held the throne, but few in Spain or its colonies recognized the usurper's authority. Instead, most Spanish subjects viewed Joséph as a charlatan and his brother's puppet. To perform the duties of government and organize resistance to the French, then, regional juntas sprang up across Spain. These disorganized bodies had little true power, commanded few men, and were constantly in flight from the occupying French army. By 1810, Joséph's forces had driven most of these juntas into Cádiz, a fortified city on Spain's southern coast. In Cádiz, the various juntas consolidated into a single representative government, meant to rule Spain and its colonies until Ferdinand returned from exile. This Cortés of Cádiz introduced a number of liberal reforms and asked Spain's New World colonies to recognize its authority and send representatives to take part in its government.⁶⁰

With the king in France, a puppet on the Spanish throne, and now an illegitimate body in Cádiz claiming authority, colonial rulers in the Americas were unsure who ruled Spain. In frontier regions like the Río de la Plata, criollo elites formed their own governing bodies, refused to recognize the Cortés of Cádiz, claimed to respect only Ferdinand's authority, and became virtually independent of the mother country. The more populous and racially diverse New Spain and Peru, on the other hand, proclaimed allegiance to the Cortés of Cádiz. Although most *peninsulares* in New Spain distrusted the Cádiz government's liberal leanings, they hoped

⁵⁹ Information on Napoleon's conquest of Spain, Joseph's assumption of the throne, and Spanish America's reaction can be found in numerous histories. I used Carr, *Spain 1808-1975*, 79-80 and Colin M. MacLachlan and William H. Beezley, *Mexico's Crucial Century, 1810-1910: An Introduction* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 8-9.

⁶⁰ MacLachlan and Beezley, *Mexico's Crucial Century*, 9-11.

that by supporting the Cortés they would retain legitimacy in areas distant from Mexico City. In doing so, they hoped to control regional strongmen and prevent an uprising of the lower classes. They soon discovered that some would only recognize the government's authority if the exiled Ferdinand returned to the throne.⁶¹

Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costillo was one such person. Well-versed in the Enlightenment literature that had inspired the French Revolution, the charismatic Hidalgo saw glaring flaws in Spain's social and political system and believed that persons of Indian ancestry should have the same rights as their European counterparts. Hidalgo was unafraid to voice his opinions to his parishioners. This outspokenness—as well as the priest's love of wine, women, gambling, and dance—brought Hidalgo to the attention of New Spain's Inquisition, a body created to ensure obedience to the Catholic Church and the monarchy. In 1800, the Inquisition charged Hidalgo with gambling, reading forbidden books, and teaching heresy. Although the Inquisition lacked sufficient evidence to convict Hidalgo, the trial sullied the priest's career, forcing him to accept a position in a church in the small, poverty-stricken town of Dolores in 1803. Hidalgo spent the next seven years in Dolores helping the town's Indian and mestizo poor. In violation of Spanish law, he taught grape and olive cultivation, encouraged reading, and preached enlightened philosophy.⁶²

⁶¹ MacLachlan and Beezley, *Mexico's Crucial Century*, 10-14. The move for independence in Latin American and the relationship between New World criollos, peninsulares, the Cortés, and the Napoleonic government are the subjects of much scholarship. For an excellent collection of essays discussing these topics, see John Lynch, ed., *Latin American Revolution, 1808-1826: Old and New World Origins* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994). See also, Michael C. Meyer and William H. Beezley, eds. *The Oxford History of Mexico* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁶² Henry Charles Lea, "Hidalgo and Morelos," *The American Historical Review* 4 (July 1899): 636-638; Enrique Krauze, *Mexico: Biography of Power* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997), 91, 93-94. For an overview of Hidalgo and his revolt against the government of New Spain, see Hugh M. Hamill Jr., *The Hidalgo Revolt: Prelude to Mexican Independence* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1996).

Hidalgo's actions brought him to the attention of like-minded progressive Ignacio Allende, a criollo from the nearby province of Guanajuato who resented his caste's exclusion from the upper echelons of New Spain's society. With Allende's help, Hidalgo concocted a plan to use the chaos of the Napoleonic Wars to overthrow peninsulare rule and bring about social reform that would benefit both criollos and New Spain's lower classes. To do so, Hidalgo would incite his parishioners, use them to confiscate property from wealthy peninsulares and government officials in nearby Guanajuato, and form a new government. The two men would make clear that they were rebelling against the government in Mexico City, which they claimed followed Napoleon, not the rightful Spanish king, Ferdinand. They also hoped to gain support of criollos who feared a race war by using little violence. The conspiracy was to go into effect on December 8, 1810, during the annual fair of San Juan de los Lagos.⁶³

Unfortunately for the conspirators, Spanish authorities uncovered the details of the plot before the set date, so on September 16, 1810, Hidalgo put his plan into action early by addressing the people of Dolores from atop his church. Claiming allegiance to King Ferdinand, Hidalgo called on his parishioners to expel the peninsulares and overthrow the illegitimate, Napoleon-controlled government in Mexico City. He then reportedly cried, "Viva Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, viva la independencia," and finished with the call, "Viva México," giving a name to the proposed independent nation and the Mexican revolutionaries who sought to

⁶³ Lea, "Hidalgo and Morelos," 636-638; Hugh M. Hamill, Jr., "Early Psychological Warfare in the Hidalgo Revolt," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 41 (May 1961): 207-209.

achieve it. Oppressed for centuries, Indians and mestizos from nearby villages rallied to Hidalgo's call and within weeks, the priest stood at the head of a 50,000-man army.⁶⁴

Unfortunately for Hidalgo, he began to lose control of his revolution when it approached Guanajuato. Whereas a desire for social and political reform motivated Hidalgo and Allende, many of the mestizos and Indians in the insurgent army wanted only profit and vengeance against whites for hundreds of years of oppression. This would prove to be a problem because the criollos whose support Hidalgo hoped to enlist physically resembled penninsulares and like penninsulares had benefited from Indian subjugation. When Hidalgo ordered his peasant army to attack Guanajuato's penninsulares but leave the town's criollos alone, the mestizo and Indian insurgents ignored the orders and looted and destroyed Spanish and criollo property alike. The news of Indian violence against whites prompted criollos outside of Guanajuato to conclude that Hidalgo was leading a race war. Support for revolution among New Spain-born whites dwindled.⁶⁵

Hidalgo's army continued to grow without criollo support and the poorly funded Spanish army—spread across New Spain and with men tied up in the Napoleonic Wars in Europe—was in no position to stop it. By October 1810, Hidalgo stood at the gates of New Spain's capital with 80,000 men. But in a twist that cannot be fully understood today, the insurgent leader

⁶⁴ MacLachlan and Beezley, *Mexico's Crucial Century*, 14; Hamill, "Early Psychological Warfare in the Hidalgo Revolt," 209-210. Although these factors can explain why many in New Spain decided to rebel, individuals had their own motivations. Perhaps the best study as to why the people of New Spain turned on their government comes from Eric Van Young, who argued that individuals rebelled for a wide variety of political, economic, and personal reasons and became involved in larger movements only after they had made the decision to revolt. See Van Young, *The Other Rebellion*, 21. For a brief historiographical discussion of revolution in New Spain and Mexico, see Will Fowler, "Understanding Individual and Collective Insurrectionary Action in Independent Mexico, 1821-1876," *Malcontents, Rebels, and Pronunciados: The Politics of Insurrection in Nineteenth-Century Mexico*, ed. Will Fowler (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012), xvii-xxxvi. See also, Hamill, *The Hidalgo Revolt*.

⁶⁵ Hamill, "Early Psychological Warfare in the Hidalgo Revolt," 209-211; Krauze, *Mexico*, 97.

halted his advance. This allowed Viceroy of Francisco Venegas and General Felix María Calleja time to gather an army to defend the city and take the offensive against the insurgent army. The revitalized Spaniards drove the insurgents northward, with Calleja scoring a major victory over Hidalgo at Puente de Calderón on January 17, 1811. Flustered, Hidalgo and Allende decided to flee to the frontier province of Texas, where they hoped to gain United States support for their revolution. The insurgents would not complete the trip owing to a man who would later play a prominent role in Arredondo's life, Ignacio Elizondo. Elizondo had proclaimed for revolution, but after secretly returning to the royalist fold, decided to set a trap for Hidalgo and Allende: he told the insurgent leaders of a well in Coahuila where their parched men could get water. When Hidalgo and Allende arrived on March 21, 1811, royalist forces captured them and brought them to nearby Chihuahua, where the insurgents were given a trial, found guilty, and executed.⁶⁶

Hidalgo's execution threw the insurgency into disarray. Although some revolutionaries continued to fight for social reform, without the charismatic Hidalgo, the insurgency devolved into a decentralized chaotic phase where combatants fought for personal reasons. The war became less about independence and more about redressing past grievances and gaining power. Violence erupted everywhere. Local leaders, disenchanted with Spanish rule, formed private militias, threw out regional officials, and assumed control of towns and provinces. Rebels abandoned large armies and instead turned to guerrilla-style warfare. The conflict also took on a greater racial overtone, as Indians and mestizos throughout New Spain rose against whites, criollos and Spaniards alike. Other "insurgents" had no political or social agenda; they

⁶⁶ Hamill, "Early Psychological Warfare in the Hidalgo Revolt," 22; Henderson, *The Mexican Wars for Independence*, 97-104; MacLachlan and Beezley, *Mexico's Crucial Century*, 15.

saw the chaos of the revolution as a chance to rape, pillage, and murder. Joaquín de Arredondo would make his name from this chaos.⁶⁷

News of Hidalgo's revolt reached Arredondo in Tehuacán as Hidalgo was marching on Mexico City in October 1810. By this time, Arredondo had taken command of the Battalion of Veracruz of the Regimiento Fijo de Infanteria de Veracruz. Officially, Spanish infantry battalions were to have 800 men, but in practice, they rarely carried even half this number; the Battalion of Veracruz probably numbered from 200 to 300 men at the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution in 1810. There is no indication that Arredondo and his men participated in the fighting north of Mexico City in October and November 1810. In December 1810, however, the infantry of Veracruz received an assignment: Viceroy Francisco Javier Venegas promoted Arredondo to colonel and ordered him and his battalion to proceed to Nuevo Santander and Texas, where they were to put down a local rebellion and cut off Hidalgo's escape. They were also to assist Generals José de la Cruz and Felix María Calleja in fighting the insurgency in other areas of northeastern New Spain.⁶⁸

Arredondo and his men's first stop would be Nuevo Santander. Made up of today's Tamaulipas and southern Texas, Nuevo Santander lay on the Gulf Coast of northeastern New Spain, far from Mexico City. The province was a geographical sundry of land types. It had

⁶⁷ Hugh M. Hamill, Jr., "Royalist Counterinsurgency in the Mexican War for Independence: The Lessons of 1811," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 53 (August 1973): 477-478.

⁶⁸ Arredondo to Viceroy Venegas, January 26, 1811 in *Operaciones de Guerra*, R3, University of California, Santa Barbara: Primary Source Microfilm, 1811-1821, hereafter cited OG. *Operaciones de Guerra* is a microfilm collection of some of Arredondo's correspondence concerning military matters from 1811 to 1821. It seems that the collection was originally divided into separate volumes. Unfortunately, the four microfilm rolls from the University of California, Santa Barbara seem to have been photocopied without considering volume number, as it is unclear when one volume begins and another ends. As such, I have cited documents based on the roll in which they appear. Roll 1 is R1; roll 2, R2; etc.... I use a similar citation system for the Béxar Archive microfilm collection. René Chartrand and Bill Younghusband, *Spanish Army of the Napoleonic Wars*, Vol. 1, 1793-1808 (Oxford: Osprey Military 1998), 15-16; Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820. Sources indicate that Arredondo's original assignment was to proceed to Texas, where he was to cut off Hidalgo's retreat northward.

cactus-filled shrub land in its north; forest and fertile plains in its central and coastal areas; and the rugged, biologically diverse Sierra Madre Oriental mountain range in its south. Southern Nuevo Santander, in particular, would prove to be a boon to rebels, as they found the Sierra Madres a perfect place from which to launch campaigns against royalist targets.⁶⁹

In addition to its guerilla-friendly environment, insurgents thrived in Nuevo Santander for historical reasons. Owing to conflict with the region's native population and little financial incentive to colonize the region, the European population of Nuevo Santander remained sparse until José de Escandón founded twenty towns in the province in the eighteenth century. Shortly thereafter, Tlaxcalan Indians from central New Spain settled their own independent communities in Nuevo Santander, as did local Indians who entered into the Spanish sphere through the mission system. These adjacent, racially stratified communities experienced the same racial animosity seen throughout New Spain. On top of this hostility, in 1776, Nuevo Santander became a part of the Internal Provinces, a military subdivision of New Spain created to better confront the problems of the colony's northern frontier. As a part of the Internal Provinces, military officials assumed the most prominent offices in government. With little oversight from distant Mexico City, many of these officials developed despotic tendencies, creating tension between the government and the local populace.⁷⁰

This racial animosity and dissatisfaction with government would lead many in northeastern New Spain to side with Hidalgo when revolution broke out. Indeed, after Hidalgo's confidant, Mariano Jiménez, captured the province of San Luís Potosí in 1810, many local

⁶⁹ Peter Gerhard, *The North Frontier of New Spain* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), 358.

⁷⁰ Oakah L. Jones Jr., *Los Paisanos: Spanish Settlers on the Northern Frontier of New Spain* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1979), 65, 70; Patricia Osante, "Colonization and Control: The Case of Nuevo Santander," trans. Ned F. Brierley, *Choice, Persuasion, and Coercion: Social Control on Spain's North American Frontiers*, ed. Jesús F. de la Teja and Ross Frank (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 241.

leaders in neighboring Nuevo Santander proclaimed for independence. Rebels soon moved throughout the province, gathering Indian and mestizo support, and killing or imprisoning Spanish loyalists. As such, many Spaniards and fearful criollos abandoned their homes and fled to the relative safety of the few major cities in the Internal Provinces. By January 1811, the countryside of northeastern New Spain was in insurgent hands. When the governor of Nuevo Santander, Lieutenant Colonel Manuel Iturbe e Iraeta, attempted to assemble an army to fight the rebels, some of his own men proclaimed for revolution, forcing the governor and those loyal to him to flee to the city of Altamira on the Gulf Coast, where he would remain until Arredondo arrived to reinforce him.⁷¹

With the eastern provinces slipping out of Spain's hands, Viceroy Venegas ordered don Joaquín to proceed to Veracruz with all of the men he had at his command. There he would need to form a 500-man expedition and proceed to Tampico by sea. After receiving his orders in Tehuacán, Arredondo organized his some 200-man Battalion of Veracruz and immediately departed for Veracruz, reaching the port city by January 26, 1811. He then spent the next month and a half gathering men and supplies for the proposed expedition. Unfortunately for don Joaquín, he had a difficult time finding the 500 men requested by the viceroy; a number of his men deserted, while others became sick in Veracruz's insalubrious environment. When requests to the viceroy for men and supplies went unanswered, and it became apparent that there was no way to meet Venegas's 500-man request, Arredondo loaded his some 200 men, 2

⁷¹ B.W. Aston, "The Evolution of Nuevo Santander," (master's thesis, Texas Technical College, 1964), 77-79; Bancroft, *The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft: History of Mexico, 1804-1824*, Vol. IV, 239. For more on the insurrection in Nuevo Santander, see Juan Fidel Zorilla, Maribel Miró Flaquer, Octavio Herrera Pérez, *Tamaulipas: una historia compartida, 1810-1921* (Mexico D.F., Universidad Autónoma de Tamaulipas, 1993), 45-69 and Sean F. McEnroe, *From Colony to Nationhood in Mexico: Laying the Foundations, 1560-1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 172-216.

cannon, and a few supplies onboard a Spanish brigantine. As an infantry regiment, the Battalion of Veracruz does not seem to have brought any horses. It did, however, have competent and capable soldiers. This included Cadet Antonio López de Santa Anna, future president of Mexico; Captain Francisco Antonio Cao; and Captain Carlos Bilbao. Arredondo and his small army departed Veracruz on March 15, 1811.⁷²

After a five-day sea voyage, the Battalion of Veracruz disembarked in Nuevo Santander at the small port of Tampico, where they regained their composure from the sea voyage, offloaded supplies, and enlisted local men to replace those who had deserted in Veracruz. Although the viceroy had initially ordered Arredondo to retake Texas from local revolutionaries, word had reached Tampico that Texas was back in royalist hands, leading don Joaquín to decide to fight insurgents in Nuevo Santander. He began by marching his men from Tampico to nearby Altamira in order to join forces with Governor Manuel Iturbe e Iraeta and his 200-300 remaining loyalist soldiers. When don Joaquín arrived in Altamira in the last days of March, the nearly fifty-year-old Iturbe readily relinquished command of his troops and became a valuable asset in Arredondo's army. Although one army inspector would say of Iturbe, "the capacity of this commander is limited," don Joaquín would grow to trust and rely on his fellow officer. One reason for this was that as Iturbe did not mince words. Upon meeting Arredondo, the governor

⁷² Arredondo to Viceroy Venegas, January 26, 1811, OG, R3; Arredondo to Viceroy Venegas, February 27, 1811, OG, R3; Arredondo to Venegas, April 18, 1812, OG R2; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 336; Wilfrid Hardy Calcott, *The Story of an Enigma Who Once was Mexico* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), 7.

explained that the situation in Nuevo Santander was desperate: insurgents controlled the countryside and perhaps more-shockingly, they held Nuevo Santander's capital, Aguayo.⁷³

The people of Aguayo had declared for independence in a largely bloodless affair. In January 1811—with Hidalgo still in the field and neighboring provinces proclaiming for the insurgent cause—criollo leaders in the Spanish army in Aguayo decided to support the revolution. It was a strategic decision, not one born out of love for Hidalgo or his message; believing the revolution would be successful, officers told their soldiers to side with the insurgency for their own self-interest and self-preservation. Most of the men supported the decision and in March 1811, military leaders allowed insurgents José Ignacio Villaseñor, Luís Herrera, and Ildefonso Blancas and their men to enter Aguayo unmolested. The officers would regret this decision. Blancas soon made enemies among Aguayo's residents when he tried to execute peninsulares in the town. Many criollos in Aguayo were similarly vexed upon hearing that the insurgency had taken a racial overtone and that Indians and mestizos had taken to looting farms and ranches in the countryside. Hidalgo's death in Chihuahua further deteriorated enthusiasm for independence in Aguayo, as did news that Arredondo was amassing an army in nearby Altamira. Still, with the defector soldiers of the Spanish army and the men under Blancas and Villaseñor, revolutionary forces in Aguayo numbered some 800 men, almost twice that which Arredondo and Iturbe commanded.⁷⁴

⁷³Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 336; Alamán, *Historia de México*, Vol. II, 246; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 22-23; Aston, "The Evolution of Nuevo Santander," 79-80; Archer, *The Birth of Modern Mexico*, 28; Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820.

⁷⁴Juan Fidel Zorrilla, *Tamaulipas y la guerra de Independencia: acontecimientos, actores y escenarios: homenaje a Juan Fidel Zorrilla* (Ciudad Victoria, Tamaulipas: Gobierno del Estado de Tamaulipas, Comisión Organizadora para la Conmemoración en Tamaulipas del Bicentenario de la Independencia y Centenario de la Revolución Mexicana, 2008), 68-70, 78; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 337.

After Iturbe informed Arredondo of the situation in Aguayo, the Spanish colonel issued an edict to the people of Nuevo Santander informing them that though they, “deserve no mercy, there was still time to remove the dark stain” in which they were covered. To receive a pardon, insurgents need only to turn over their firearms and retire to their homes within eight days. Arredondo also called on the locals to join his militia units and help him in fighting the rebellion.⁷⁵

An eclectic mix of men answered this call. Royalist land-holding whites wanting to maintain order brought horses, adding much-needed cavalry to don Joaquín’s army. Tlaxcalan Indian militias from towns that had remained faithful to Spain, deserters hoping for clemency, and persons of African descent, possibly members of Altamira’s numerous free black population, also filed into the Spanish camp, as did some who had fought under the banner of Hidalgo but now thought the royalists offered a better opportunity to loot. With these new recruits and Iturbe’s soldiers, Arredondo now commanded a contingent of two hundred cavalry, three hundred infantry, and some additional, enumerated local militia. He sent some of these men with Captain Carlos Bilbao to patrol the area between nearby Santa Barbara, Escandón, and Villa de Valles. The rest joined Arredondo and Iturbe when they departed Altamira for Aguayo in early April.⁷⁶

After several days travel across coastal plain, the makeshift Spanish army made camp outside Aguayo on April 7. As Arredondo and his forces prepared for the battle, a priest named Hipólito San Cristóbal de Ayala and civil leader Gaspar Lopes approached the Spanish camp with

⁷⁵ Zorrilla, *Tamaulipas y la guerra de independencia*, 74-75 (quotation on page 75); Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820.

⁷⁶ Zorrilla, *Tamaulipas y la guerra de independencia*, 74-75; McEnroe, *From Colony to Nationhood*, 187; Jiménez, “Loyalist Officer in New Spain,” 22-23; Aston, “The Evolution of Nuevo Santander,” 79-80.

stirring news. They claimed that the once-royalist military leaders and their insurgent allies in Aguayo no longer wanted any part of the revolution that was sweeping the countryside. Instead, Blancas, Herrera, and Villaseñor wanted to cede control of the town to Arredondo without a fight. All that Arredondo needed to do was leave his army, come to town, and negotiate terms of surrender. The news excited don Joaquín's men, but the colonel was hesitant to believe the proposition, sensing a trap. Instead of entering the city himself, then, don Joaquín sent Captain Francisco Antonio Cao with orders to verify the priest's claim, take control of the town, and report to Arredondo. When Cao failed to return, don Joaquín's fear of a trap grew, and he had his men interrogate a group of insurgents that had been captured outside of town. The interrogation confirmed the colonial's suspicions: the insurgents in Aguayo planned to lure the Spanish army into the city, lull the soldiers into a false sense of security, and butcher them while they slept.⁷⁷

Arredondo responded with a ploy of his own. He told his men that he was planning to give them a day of rest and let this news spread to the defectors in Aguayo. Instead of resting, however, the Spanish forces marched to Aguayo under the cover of night on April 12, 1811. Just as the morning sun crested the horizon, the Spanish army rushed the rebel positions. The drowsy, surprised insurgents were unable to mount a defense and quickly surrendered their artillery and firearms intact. Arredondo had taken Aguayo without a fight.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Aston, "The Evolution of Nuevo Santander," 79-80; Alamán, *Historia de México*, Vol. II, 246-247; Zorrilla, *Tamaulipas y la guerra de independencia*, 75-76; Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820; Isidro Vizcaya Canales, *En los albores de la independencia: Las Provincias Internas de Oriente* (Monterrey: Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey, 1976), 257-258.

⁷⁸ Canales, *En los albores de la independencia*, 258; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 24; Alamán, *Historia de México*, Vol. II, 247.

Victorious, Arredondo rode into town intent on sending a message to those who would support revolution. He had his men slowly torture insurgent leaders Villaseñor, Herrera, Blancas, and six others before hanging them from the gallows. The soldiers and officers who had proclaimed for the insurgency suffered public humiliation and were severely beaten with horsewhips. Don Joaquín pardoned many of this number on the condition that they join his army. He also doled out pardons to those who provided monetary compensation and those who were related to the militiamen who had joined the royalists prior to the battle. Arredondo dispatched many insurgents to prisons in Altamira and Veracruz—a fate that, owing to the horrid conditions in these prisons, was often tantamount to a death sentence. According to one historian, many of the imprisoned were innocent of crimes. Arredondo only kept them alive to serve as false witnesses for other crimes and to “give an appearance of justice to the caprice, hatred, and animosity of the commander.” Arredondo’s caprice, hatred, and animosity did have its limits, as he pardoned mentally handicapped insurgents. This leniency, however, may have come more from exhilaration than compassion, as news of Hidalgo’s capture reached Arredondo when he arrived in Aguayo.⁷⁹

Don Joaquín received more good news shortly thereafter. Viceroy Venegas sent Governor Iturbe orders to assume governorship of a different province and to turn the governorship of Nuevo Santander over to Arredondo. Iturbe complied with Venegas by relinquishing his office to don Joaquín, but instead of retiring to his new governorship, he requested and received permission to stay on as Arredondo’s second-in-command. In spite of

⁷⁹ Zorrilla, *Tamaulipas y la guerra de independencia*, 78, 258; Callcott, *Santa Anna*, 8-9; Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820; José María Luis Mora, *Méjico y sus revoluciones*, Vol. IV (Paris, Librería de Rosa, 1836), 263-265.

his new title, don Joaquín would not remain in Aguayo to govern. Instead, he wanted to bring the remaining insurgents in northeastern New Spain to justice.⁸⁰

A few days after his victory in Aguayo, Arredondo learned that rebel Juan Villerías was marching on the village of Palmillas in southwestern Nuevo Santander. Villerías was a prominent rebel leader who had been leading successful sorties against Spanish targets since the early days of the revolution. At the start of 1811, Villerías had been heading northward in order to support Hidalgo on his expedition to Texas. Upon hearing that Spanish forces captured Hidalgo, Villerías turned south where he hoped to combine his 600-man army with the forces of insurgent leader Ignacio López de Rayón in Tula—a city (150) km southwest of Aguayo. At one point, the overconfident Villerías, having learned that Arredondo had landed in Nuevo Santander, sent a letter inviting don Joaquín to join the insurgency. Arredondo not only refused Villerías's overture, but had his executioner publicly burn the communication.⁸¹

In order to prevent Villerías from uniting with the insurgents in Tula, Arredondo dispatched Captain Bilbao and sixty troops from the Battalion of Veracruz to scout the route to Tula. When Bilbao arrived outside of the town, a numerically superior revolutionary army attacked him. Although Bilbao managed to drive back this group, he fell into a Villerías trap at a place named Los Évanos shortly thereafter. Thankfully for Bilbao, eighty reinforcements—sent by a concerned Arredondo—arrived at the last moment and assisted Bilbao in fighting Villerías to a standoff. Villerías managed to escape the battle unharmed.⁸²

⁸⁰ Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain", 24.

⁸¹ Arredondo to Venegas, April 22, 1811, OG, R2; Zorrilla, *Tamaulipas y la guerra de independencia*, 80; Bancroft, *History of Mexico* Vol. 4, 321; Alamán, *Historia de México*, Vol. II, 278.

⁸² Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 26.

Villerías was proving to be more elusive than don Joaquín had first imagined. With his trusted Veracruz infantry unable to bring in the insurgent, Arredondo looked to Captain Cayetano Quintero and 280 local cavalymen to complete the task. Spanish-born ranchers with significant land holdings in southeastern Nuevo Santander, Cayetano and his brother Juan had first met don Joaquín outside Altamira. There, the royalist sympathizers had provisioned Arredondo's army at their "El Cojo" hacienda in preparation for the attack on Aguayo. This seems to have earned don Joaquín's trust, as the colonel would come to rely heavily on the Quinteros in the coming years. Cayetano, in particular, distinguished himself in Arredondo's service. Although sources are largely silent on Cayetano's personality, the brevity and muted tone of his letters portray him as a man willing to carry out orders with efficiency and little fanfare, Arredondo's instrument of retribution. This trusting relationship began in April 1811, when don Joaquín ordered Cayetano to flush out Villerías. The colonel also sent an infantry contingent under Iturbe to cut off the insurgent's escape.⁸³

After receiving his orders, Cayetano Quintero and his cavalymen searched for Villerías for two weeks, eventually tracking the insurgent to a place named Estanque Colorado on May 9. Apprised of Quintero's approach, Villerías attacked. Although drastically outnumbered, Quintero proved his worth. His men routed the rebel army, killing 30 men and taking another 150-300 prisoners. They also confiscated 7 artillery pieces. Villerías managed to escape the battlefield and attempted to flee to the city of Matehuala. He did not make it. Colonel Iturbe's infantry surprised the disorganized insurgent and scattered what remained of his army. One

⁸³ Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 26; Zorrilla, *Tamaulipas y la guerra de independencia*, 75; Alamán, *Historia de México*, Vol. II, 279-280. The Quintero brothers, Cayetano in particular, are fascinating figures deserving of their own study. For more on the Quinteros, see Catherine Andrews, "The Rise and Fall of a Regional Strongman: Felipe de la Garza's Pronunciamiento of 1822," in Fowler, ed. *Malcontents, Rebels, and Pronunciados*, 24.

soldier, Antonio López de Santa Anna, proved particularly effective in this encounter. Although Villerías managed to escape Iturbe's attack, he was not so lucky when he reached Matehuala, as royalists defending the town killed the rebel leader and the few men that remained at his side. On May 12, Quintero and Iturbe's forces reunited with Arredondo at Palmillas, turned over their captives, and relayed news of Villerías's death. In celebration, don Joaquín had his artillerymen fire off their cannons and ordered the execution of three rebel prisoners.⁸⁴

With Villerías dead, the only remaining insurgent stronghold in the region was the city of Tula, west of the Nuevo Santander border in San Luís Potosí. One of the largest cities in northeastern New Spain, Tula was, like Aguayo, a major commercial, military, and political center. The rebellion in Tula, however, was different from Aguayo's military coup. In response to years of oppression at the hands of a racist Spanish system, the mostly Indian population of Tula rose up during the city's annual fair on December 4, 1810, and captured the local military barracks. The crowd reveled in the victory with chants of "death to Spain." Led by rebel leaders Bernardo Gómez de Lara, Mateo Acuña, Benancio García, and Father Pedroza, revolutionaries continued to battle royalists for control of Tula until taking the town in January 1811. The insurgents then locked Spaniards and criollo elites in jail and redistributed their cattle to the city's poor. Indians and mestizos from neighboring provinces flocked to the city, and soon the rebels had an army numbering some 2,000 men.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Alamán, *Historia de México*, Vol. II, 279-280; Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 338.

⁸⁵ Bancroft, *History of Mexico* Vol. IV, 321; David Piñera Ramírez, *Visión histórica de la frontera Norte de México* (Mexicali: Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, Centro de Investigaciones Históricas, UNAM-UABC, 1987), 33, 35; Zorrilla, *Tamaulipas y la guerra de independencia*, 28, 84. After the annual fair, royalists retook Tula and tortured those who had participated in the rioting. Shortly thereafter, revolutionaries under Bernardo Gómez de Lara recaptured the town.

The Indian uprising in Tula troubled northeastern New Spain's peninsular and criollo population, leading Arredondo to march on the city in May 1811. He dispatched thirty scouts in advance of his main army to assess the rebels' strength. On May 21, revolutionaries ambushed these scouts, killing all thirty men before they could fire a shot. The insurgents then hung the scouts from nearby mesquite trees. The next day, this grim scene greeted Arredondo and his oncoming army.⁸⁶

Soon after passing under the corpses of their fellow soldiers, the Spanish army came upon 2,000 Indian and mestizos under Mateo Acuña. In what would come to be known as the Battle of the Bones (*la Batalla del Huesitos*), the insurgent army rushed Arredondo's men brandishing bows and arrows, tools, and homemade weapons. If the sight of an angry, crazed mob rushing in their direction frightened Arredondo's men, their actions did not show it; the better-trained and better-armed soldiers fell into formation and repelled the initial assault. A contingent of royalists under Iturbe then brazenly charged the rebel lines, scattered their formation, and turned the tide of battle. With their compatriots falling to Spanish gunfire, the remaining insurgents fled, having inflicted only four dead and two wounded on the royalists. Sources are unclear on how many casualties the revolutionaries suffered, but Arredondo reported catching 150 of their number after the battle.⁸⁷

The insurgents who escaped the *Batalla del Huesitos* returned to Tula and exacted vengeance on the Spaniards locked in the local jail—Indians slowly roasted one unlucky prisoner alive and feasted on his flesh. The following day, Arredondo and his men rode into Tula

⁸⁶ Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820; Zorrilla, *Tamaulipas y la guerra de independencia*, 86-87.

⁸⁷ Zorrilla, *Tamaulipas y la guerra de independencia*, 86-87; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 26; Alamán, *Historia de México*, Vol. II, 281. For what was one of the largest battles in the history of northeastern New Spain, there is surprisingly little scholarship on *la Batalla del Huesitos*.

and captured Mateo Acuña and several other prominent revolutionaries who had foolishly remained in the town. Acuña's cohorts, Bernardo Gómez de Lara, Benancio García, and Father Pedroza, however, had fled shortly before the royalists arrived. To catch the fleeing rebels, Arredondo dispatched Captain José María González and a contingent of cavalymen. Although unsuccessful in finding the insurgent leaders, González captured Benancio García's son and grandson, as well as other prominent rebels. Perhaps as revenge for what happened to his scouts, Arredondo had the insurgent prisoners hanged from trees. He left the bodies suspended as a reminder of what happened to those who defy royalist rule.⁸⁸

Although don Joaquín would continue to look for García and Pedroza, he focused his efforts on Indian leader Bernardo Gómez de Lara. Also known as "Huacal," which loosely translates to "cage," Gómez de Lara was responsible for the uprising in Tula, had been a part of the rebel army at the Battle of the Bones, and had escaped with 600 men. Following the battle, Huacal launched a race war aimed at criollos and *pennisulares* in the hinterlands of northeastern New Spain. Arredondo dispatched 60 cavalry and 120 infantrymen under Captain Francisco Antonio Cao to overtake Huacal's forces in the Sierras de Santa María. The 180 men caught up to and engaged Huacal on May 24, but although they inflicted heavy casualties on the numerically superior insurgent army, Huacal escaped capture.⁸⁹

Suspecting that Huacal had fled in the direction of San Luís Potosí, Arredondo asked that region's military commander, Félix María Calleja, to search his province for Gómez de Lara. A Spanish-born pragmatist, Calleja had spent his military career fighting nomadic Indians and

⁸⁸ Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 27; Bancroft, *History of Mexico*, Vol. IV, 321. Bancroft does not make clear whether the insurgents or the royalists left the captive to be eaten by Indians. Aston believed it to be Arredondo's doing. See Aston, "The Evolution of Nuevo Santander," 81.

⁸⁹ Bancroft, *History of Mexico*, Vol. IV, 322; Arredondo to Venegas, May 26, 1811, OG, R2; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 27.

filibusters, but his most noteworthy victory had happened just six months before when he defeated Hidalgo's forces north of Mexico City. Following Hidalgo's capture and execution, Calleja had marched on San Luís Potosí—215km southwest of Arredondo in Tula—where he found the region to be a “desert... filled with monsters.” Upon receiving don Joaquín's request for assistance with Huacal, Calleja ordered patrols of nearby towns. These men reported that Huacal and 1,000 insurgents had captured the small town of Matehuala. Calleja informed Arredondo of the circumstances and dispatched a body of soldiers under one don José María Semper to move on Matehuala.⁹⁰

Having also learned of Huacal's location, Arredondo sent Antonio Elosúa with 40 cavalry and 60 infantry to Matehuala. They arrived on June 22, just as Calleja's men were attacking the opposite side of town. Beset on both sides and armed only with knives, slings, and bows and arrows, the insurgents proved no match for the royalists, suffering 193 dead, 12 wounded, and 159 captured before abandoning the town. The royalists sustained only five casualties. Although Huacal escaped once again, the victory at Matehuala helped form a cordial working relationship between Calleja and don Joaquín. Soon to be named viceroy of New Spain, Calleja would exhibit a strong partiality towards Arredondo.⁹¹

After receiving news of Huacal's most recent flight, Arredondo set off for his capital in Aguayo on June 14 to coordinate efforts to capture the rebel leader. Before leaving Tula, he reinstated deposed military and political leaders, enforced Spanish law, and organized the

⁹⁰ Alamán, *Historia de México*, Vol. II, 182-184; Henderson, *The Mexican Wars For Independence*, 44, 82, 98 (quotation on page 44). For more on the career of Calleja, see Carol C. Ferguson, “The Spanish Tamerlane?: Félix María Calleja, Viceroy of New Spain, 1813-1816,” (Ph.D. diss., Texas Christian University, 1973) and Timothy E. Anna, “The Last Viceroys of New Spain and Peru: An Appraisal,” *The American Historical Review* 81 (February 1976): 38-65.

⁹¹ Arredondo to Venegas, May 26, 1811, OG, R2; Jiménez, “Loyalist Officer in New Spain,” 30-31; Alamán, *Historia de México*, Vol. II, 183-184.

government as it had been prior to takeover. He also stationed 250 cavalry and 3 cannons in Tula, Santa Bárbara, Palmillas, and Jaumabe to deter future uprisings and keep watch over the roads from San Luís Potosí, Valle del Maíz and Río Verde.⁹²

Once back in Aguayo at the end of June, Arredondo sent a 250-man army to monitor the Valle del Maíz, where officials were reporting that Huacal was attacking Spanish possessions. Don Joaquín placed this army under trusted militiamen Cayetano Quintero and Captain Felipe de la Garza, the latter a young, enthusiastic native of Nuevo Santander with extensive knowledge of the province's geography. History would come to know De la Garza as the man who executed Mexico's first emperor, Agustín de Iturbide.⁹³

Quintero and De la Garza arrived in the Valle del Maíz on August 7. After dividing their forces to cover a greater distance, De la Garza and sixty cavalymen soon picked up Huacal's trail. It was not hard to follow, as the Indian leader had left a trail of destruction in his wake; the insurgents had robbed homes, destroyed a prison, and sent locals fleeing into the countryside. Huacal kidnapped one poor woman to satiate his sexual desires. On August 10, as De la Garza was closing in on Huacal's position, some 1,000 rebels surrounded him at a place named Los Potroros and attacked. Although outnumbered over 16 to 1, the Spanish army broke through the rebels' trap and forced the insurgents to take flight. De la Garza and his men then rejoined Quintero to pursue the fleeing insurgents.⁹⁴

Twenty days after the attack at Los Potroros, Quintero and De la Garza found Huacal near a hacienda named Amoladeras. The discovery must have been bittersweet, as the

⁹² Arredondo to Venegas, June 14, 1811, OG, R2; Alamán, *Historia de México*, Vol. II, 282.

⁹³ Arredondo to Venegas, June 14, 1811, OG; Alamán, *Historia de México*, Vol. II, 282; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 27, 30. For more on De la Garza, see Catherine Andrews, "The Rise and Fall of a Regional Strongman," 22-41.

⁹⁴ Arredondo to Calleja, September 7, 1811, OG, R2.

insurgent had somehow accumulated an army of 5,000 Indian men, according to Arredondo. Quintero and De la Garza commanded only 287 soldiers. Huacal's men did not have the firearms of the Spanish army, but with such a massive numerical advantage, they probably did not think that it would matter. It did. In one of the most lopsided defeats in the history of the Americas, the diminutive Spanish force attacked the insurgents and won the field.

Unfortunately for historians, details of this monumental battle are scarce. Quintero sent a straightforward report of his victory with few details to Arredondo. Don Joaquín then relayed the information up the chain of command. One detail that emerged from the battle, however, was the performance of Cadet Antonio López de Santa Anna. After receiving an arrow wound to his left arm, the future president of Mexico valiantly continued to fight, an action that would earn him commendation from Quintero.⁹⁵

In spite of the victory at Amoladeras, Quintero was unable to locate Huacal. The Indian had fled to the province of Guanajuato where he continued his campaign of vengeance until Spanish forces captured him at the town of San Miguel el Grande. Huacal, who had evaded Arredondo for over six months, was then hung from the gallows in a cage-like device known as a gibbet. The man who lived with the nickname "Cage" died in a cage.⁹⁶

With Huacal gone, Arredondo reported to Viceroy Venegas that Nuevo Santander was "totally pacified." Don Joaquín then rewarded the men who had brought it to this state. He promoted Cayetano Quintero and his brother Juan for their contributions to the royalist cause and gave Cayetano's helper at the Battle of Amoladeras, Felipe de la Garza, the rank of

⁹⁵ Arredondo to Calleja, September 7, 1811, OG, R2; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 29-31; Callcott, *Santa Anna*, 7-9.

⁹⁶ Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 29-31.

Lieutenant Colonel. Likewise, Carlos Bilbao, who had been instrumental in tracking down Villarías, received a promotion; as did Antonio Elosúa, who had assisted in the search for Huacal. Arredondo also recommended Manuel Iturbe for advancement. Don Joaquín also took time to commend some cadets in his regiment. One such junior officer was Antonio López de Santa Anna, whom Arredondo claimed had, “enough constancy to suffer the inconveniences of continuous marches, giving an example in this way to the troops, and demonstrating the most vivid desires to give credit to their valor.” Don Joaquín was so impressed with Santa Anna that he transferred him to a prestigious cavalry unit. Over the next year, Arredondo would twice recommend the ambitious young cadet for promotion.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ Arredondo to Venegas, April 18, 1812, OG, R2; Arredondo to Venegas, June 28, 1811, OG, R2, F70; Arredondo to Venegas, June 3, 1811, OG, R2 (first quotation); Callcott, *Santa Anna*, 7-9 (second quotation on pages 8-9) .

CHAPTER 4

ARREDONDO AS ADMINISTRATOR AND DELEGATOR, 1812

Is there a sensible man, a lover of social order, that can possibly think that a military man, however honorable he may be, can be capable of directing the government of a vast province in all its various political, civil, economic, and financial affairs?

Miguel Ramos de Arizpe

With Nuevo Santander at peace, Arredondo settled in at Aguayo to perform the administrative duties that came along with his governorship. As governor, he would be responsible for the wellbeing of the some 60,000 persons that called Nuevo Santander home. Sequestered in some twenty-six towns, the majority of Nuevo Santander's inhabitants were ranchers and farmers. Most were criollos. There had been conflict with local Indians when the Spanish first settled Nuevo Santander in the eighteenth century, but by 1811, most natives had entered missions and adopted European customs. Owing to early conflicts with Indians, the Spanish placed military personnel in many of Nuevo Santander's civilian offices and built cities with defense in mind. The founders of Aguayo had even arranged the city in a square for defensive purposes.⁹⁸

As governor, Arredondo held most of the executive, judicial, and legislative power in Nuevo Santander. He was responsible for touring his province, maintaining order, raising taxes, supervising local elections, and posting edicts from his superiors. He could write law, as well as serve as judge and jury in both civil and criminal court cases. It was also Arredondo's

⁹⁸ Miguel Ramos de Arizpe, *Report that Dr. Miguel Ramos de Arizpe, Priest of Borbon, and Deputy in the Present General and Special Cortes of Spain for the Province of Coahuila, One of the Four Eastern Interior Provinces of the Kingdom of Mexico, Presents to the August Congress, on the Natural, Political and Civil Condition of the Provinces of Coahuila, Nuevo León, Nuevo Santander, and Texas of the Four Eastern Interior Provinces of the Kingdom of Mexico*, ed. and trans. Nettie Lee Benson (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), 14.

responsibility to care for Nuevo Santander's Indians. Although many governors took advantage of this obligation by demanding excessive tribute from Indians, don Joaquín does not appear to have done so. He treated Indians as poorly as he treated many whites. In many ways, owing to a sprawling bureaucracy and ever-changing political realities, the powers held by the governor of Nuevo Santander were undefined and subject to negotiation.⁹⁹

Arredondo did not have absolute power in the Nuevo Santander. As governor, he was subordinate to the viceroy of New Spain, the commandant general of the Internal Provinces, and the king. When don Joaquín entered the governorship, the maligned Joséph Bonaparte was still on the throne of Spain, so Arredondo did not report to him. The commandant general of the Internal Provinces was Nemesio Salcedo, who had served in his office admirably since 1802. By 1811, however, insurgents in Texas, Indian attacks, and the threat of invasion from the United States had distracted Salcedo from his administrative duties. Accordingly, don Joaquín had little interaction with Salcedo and reported mainly to Viceroy Venegas.¹⁰⁰

The bureaucratic intricacies of the Spanish system also limited don Joaquín's power. To prevent governors from using their office for personal and financial gain, the government placed restrictions on the office. Governors served a set term, could not hail from the province they governed, could not engage in business in their province, and had to submit an inventory of their estate to prevent profiteering. Local *ayuntamientos*, a form of city council, could also report abuses of power and incompetence to the government in Mexico City.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Clarence H. Haring, *The Spanish Empire in the Americas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), 138-141. Owing to conflict with Indians and distance from Mexico City, governors of Nuevo Santander had more power than those serving in other provinces. See, McEnroe, *From Colony to Nationhood*, 176-215.

¹⁰⁰ For more on Nemesio Salcedo, see Rosalind Z. Rock, "Dying Quijote: Nemesio Salcedo and the Last Years of Spain in the Internal Provinces," (Ph.D. diss., University of New Mexico, 1981).

¹⁰¹ Haring, *The Spanish Empire in the Americas*, 138-141.

Because he was unqualified to be governor, Arredondo would be the subject of multiple reports to Mexico City. Unfortunately for the civilians of Nuevo Santander, having an unqualified governor was nothing new; military men with no experience frequently served as governors in the frontier provinces of New Spain. They lacked knowledge of local laws and regional issues and, owing to poor pay and distance from Mexico City, often exploited their offices for financial and personal gain. One contemporary observer, Miguel Ramos Arizpe, spoke of the situation thusly:

A military and political governor that has been raised from a captain, a major, or at most a colonel commands through every branch. Is there a sensible man, a lover of social order, that can possibly think that a military man, however honorable he may be, can be capable of directing the government of a vast province in all its various political, civil, economic, and financial affairs? He does not know any laws but those of the military statutes in which he has been educated; he is accustomed to commanding only his company; he does not have a lawyer to advise him on the civil laws. He does not know the gentle character and the innocent habits of the fifty thousand or more laborers, herdsman, etc., whom he is going to command and against whom he is generally prejudiced, believing them to be tribes of barbarians, governable only by force and fear.... I am, therefore, not at all surprised at the excesses of many governors, at their arbitrariness and despotism.... It is an absurd system to place the absolute government of the provinces under a purely military command.¹⁰²

Although written about don Joaquín's predecessors, this assessment would prove to be applicable to Arredondo.¹⁰³

It is difficult to analyze Arredondo's time as governor of Nuevo Santander, as he rarely involved himself in legislative and judicial matters. Instead, he delegated administrative responsibilities to subordinates and devoted most of his attention to military concerns. When don Joaquín did deal with civic matters, he did so through public proclamations. These edicts

¹⁰² Arizpe, *Arizpe Report*, 28.

¹⁰³ Arizpe, *Arizpe Report*, 28.

clearly detailed what Arredondo wanted citizens to do, but beyond a few platitudes, they rarely explained why the governor wanted such things done, leaving the motivations behind the colonel's actions open to interpretation. What is evident from the various proclamations is that like most military officers placed in civil positions, don Joaquín approached problems with expectations that civilians would react with the same strict fidelity of his soldiers.¹⁰⁴

This attitude was on display in an eleven-article edict that don Joaquín issued on June 22, 1811. In the proclamation, Arredondo required everyone in Nuevo Santander traveling outside a major city to have a passport. Although this provision seems excessive, it was not, as the rebellion in northeastern New Spain was primarily a rural movement due to higher poor and Indian population in rural areas—the two demographics most likely to revolt. There was also a better chance that someone outside a major population centers would be a deserter or a contrabander. Passports, at least, made it more difficult for these groups to operate. Arredondo reinforced his position against free travel by stipulating that any commoner harboring someone without a passport would receive twenty lashes for a first offense, fifty for a second, and six years imprisonment for a third. Although members of the nobility would only be fined for the first two offenses, they, too, faced six years imprisonment for a third.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ For an analysis of Arredondo's time as governor of Nuevo Santander, see Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 340-342. Arredondo's disinterest in administrative matters can be seen in an 1820 report on his time in the eastern provinces. This lengthy document details his many military campaigns, but almost nothing on his duties as governor. See, Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820.

¹⁰⁵ Arredondo Proclamation, June 22, 1811, OG, R2, 85-88; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 28; Eric Van Young, "Islands in the Storm: Quiet Cities and Violent Countrysides in the Mexican Independence Era," *Past & Present* 118 (February 1988): 130-155; McEnroe, *From Colony to Nationhood*, 176. It was often so difficult to determine whether someone was a rebel sympathizer outside towns that when travelers encountered another group on a road, they were expected to greet one another with either "Viva México!" or "Viva España!" Incorrectly judging the other group's affiliation could lead to trouble. For another example of Arredondo requiring a passport, see, Arredondo Proclamation, August 30, 1815, *Blake Supplement to the Bexár Archives*, Vol. X, Dolph Center for American History, Austin, 148-150.

Echoing his father's actions as viceroy of the Río de la Plata, Arredondo placed harsh restrictions on the people of Nuevo Santander to discourage support for the insurgency. He warned that anyone who spoke of rebellion would be shot or hanged as a traitor to Christ and country. Perhaps with the uprising at Tula's annual fair in mind, Arredondo prohibited the sale of liquor and outlawed dances and fiestas without the expressed permission of local magistrates—as in the case of Tula, public celebrations often included overindulgence in alcohol and, subsequently, violence. Don Joaquín also ordered that servants obey their masters and for masters to treat their servants with kindness. As Arredondo informed the viceroy, these measures were in the interest of “avoiding disorders and wickedness, and keeping the people quiet and peaceful by instilling fear and terror in their hearts.”¹⁰⁶

Don Joaquín knew, however, that by limiting liquor sales and public gatherings, he was only eliminating the spark for uprisings among the lower classes, not the underlying cause: long-held racial biases and displeasure with the social and political structure of northeastern New Spain. When the first Spaniards arrived in Nuevo Santander, they settled apart from indigenous Indian communities. Tlaxcalan Indian from Central New Spain likewise settled away from Spaniards and other Indians. Indian communities had their own mayors, judges, and militias, as did Spanish settlements. Over time, however, miscegenation created a large mestizo population, and Spaniards and Indians moved to communities not of their race. Typically, Indians and mestizos settled near others of similar racial background in these towns, while Spaniards lived near other Spaniards. By the time of Arredondo's arrival in 1811, many

¹⁰⁶ Arredondo Proclamation, June 22, 1811, OG, R2; Jiménez, “Loyalist Officer in New Spain,” 28-29 (quotation on page 29); Van Young, *The Other Rebellion*, 418-419.

settlements in Nuevo Santander contained neighborhoods distinguished by the race, class, and heritage of their inhabitants.¹⁰⁷

Local leaders often gained power in these divided communities by providing services that the provincial government would or could not—something as simple as cleaning streets. Once established as an authority, these “neighborhood captains” would then use their connections to join local city councils, or *ayuntamientos*, where they would often judge and legislate for personal gain. Using the influence gained by their offices, the neighborhood captains siphoned from treasuries and instituted provisions to ensure their position on the *ayuntamiento* was hereditary. Their children and grandchildren often then abused power more than their ancestors had. Such leaders frequently took offense when outside officials interfered in local affairs, and they often raised militias to oppose perceived injustices. Although governors could reject an appointee to an *ayuntamiento*, they rarely did so on the frontier, as it was easier to allow the neighborhood captains their anonymity.¹⁰⁸

This left Arredondo with a conundrum. The neighborhood captains were inefficient, skimmed off the treasury, and many refused to assemble militias for the war effort, wanting to maintain their own personal armies. They also contributed to racial discord. Many neighborhood captains were descendents of early white settlers, yet owing to the changing demographics of Nuevo Santander’s towns, served in *ayuntamientos* in Indian and mestizo communities and ignored the problems of their darker-skinned constituents. Such racism and

¹⁰⁷ Van Young, *The Other Rebellion*, 422-424; Sean Francis McEnroe, “Spain’s Tlaxcalan Vassals: Citizenship and State Formation on Mexico’s Northern Frontier,” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2009), 311-312. For more on Indian-Spanish relations in Nuevo Santander see also, McEnroe, *From Colony to Nationhood*, 176-214. In both McEnroe’s dissertation and his book, he incorrectly refers to Arredondo as “Joachín.”

¹⁰⁸ McEnroe, “Spain’s Tlaxcalan Vassals,” 311-312; Haring. *The Spanish Empire in America*, 167.

government inefficiency, the colonel knew, were factors in creating and sustaining the insurgency in New Spain.¹⁰⁹

In order to undermine these neighborhood captains, in October 1811, Arredondo devised a political system of mixed representation wherein mixed-race villages in Nuevo Santander would annually elect three ayuntamiento leaders. Don Joaquín decreed that they would have two ayuntamiento leaders in each village, while the Spanish minority would have one. Each village would also have one mestizo or Indian judge and one Spanish judge. With each group represented, Arredondo hoped to blend the political interests of the communities, thereby eliminating the need for the unruly neighborhood captains. He also hoped to familiarize Indians and mestizos with Spain's means of governing and give them non-violent methods of redressing grievances. With more political representation, Arredondo believed that the lower classes would be less likely to revolt, a logical and benevolent conclusion. Don Joaquín's reform accomplished two goals: it redirected power from local officials to the governor and it provided Indians with political rights, something that they had long been denied.¹¹⁰

This insightful approach gives Arredondo the appearance of being an advocate of racial equality. Such an assessment is too friendly for a man who almost certainly believed that whites were inherently superior to other races. He had been raised to regard persons with darker skin as inferior and during his time in New Spain had accepted laws that disenfranchised Indians. This did not mean Arredondo was racist in the same vein as those in the United States

¹⁰⁹ Haring, *The Spanish Empire in America*, 167; Declaration of Joaquín Arredondo, October 17, 1811, Microform Collection of Documents from the Archivo General de la Nación in Mexico, 1524-1884, Benson Latin American Collection, General Libraries, University of Texas at Austin, Provincias Internas, R240, (hereafter cited as AGNPI).

¹¹⁰ McEnroe, "Spain's Tlaxcalan Vassals," 311-312; Declaration of Joaquín Arredondo, October 17, 1811.

who could not perceive of a biracial society. Don Joaquín, for example, employed Indians, mestizos, and free blacks in his militia. He also relied on testimony from those of African descent and even assisted slaves who had escaped from the United States—the latter action, however, may have had more to do with hurting the United States than helping the slaves. Race seems to have been a secondary concern to Arredondo; he would not allow racism to hurt his primary mission of restoring royalist rule, but he was not a progressive who could look past a person's ancestry. For example, don Joaquín reserved prominent positions in his army for those of European ancestry.¹¹¹

In addition to dealing with entrenched racism, Arredondo also had to confront a dire economic situation: specifically, he lacked money to pay and provision his soldiers. In order to generate revenue, then, Arredondo demanded that local treasuries send him hard currency. He also imposed new taxes on the citizens of Nuevo Santander. These *arbitrios de milicias* taxed food, manufactured goods, and commercial transactions, as well as individual wealth and personal property. Don Joaquín also imposed a 10 percent tax on the value of homes. Local hacienda owners had to submit a list of goods to Spanish officials, who would then decide how much the resident owed the government. Arredondo stipulated that citizens could pay their taxes in the form of hard currency, firearms, canoes, corn, and the preferred methods of payment owing to the army's lack of beasts of burden, mules and horses.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Ted Vincent, "The Blacks Who Freed Mexico," *The Journal of Negro History* 79 (Summer 1994): 257-276; Andrew Torget, "Cotton Empire: Slavery and the Texas Borderlands, 1820-1837," (Ph.D. diss. University of Virginia, 2009), 53-54, 70.

¹¹² Pérez, "Joaquín de Arredondo, el predominio realista," 67; Omar S. Valerio-Jiménez "Neglected Citizens and Willing Traders: The Villas del Norte (Tamaulipas) in Mexico's Northern Borderlands, 1749-1846" *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 18 (Summer 2002): 271-272.

Don Joaquín also called on the citizens of Nuevo Santander to donate goods for the war effort, although many of these “donations” were involuntary. When Arredondo first entered office, royalist sympathizers readily volunteered salt, sheep, goats, and wood; provided housing for soldiers; and repaired firearms free of charge. Over time, however, even the most loyal citizens complained that they had nothing left to donate. When this happened, Arredondo forced residents to accept assignats (government promissory notes) in exchange for their goods. On April 17, 1812, for example, don Joaquín ordered José Antonio Guerra to use assignats to buy 750 horses from towns throughout Nuevo Santander. Owners could not refuse the offer, although many likely tried. The phrase, “as worthless as an assignat,” was common parlance at the time owing to the unlikelihood that a government would ever make good on the note.¹¹³

The forced loans and increased taxation upset many citizens of Nuevo Santander, as did Arredondo’s practical jokes and callous leadership style. On at least one occasion, the colonel assembled his troops in the middle of the night, ordered his drummer to play as loudly as possible, and led his army through Aguayo’s streets, ensuring that everyone awoke from their slumber. For fun, don Joaquín had his soldiers imprison prominent citizens in the local jail on false charges. After days in which the captives endured taunts and torture, Arredondo would walk into the prison with a smile on his face and inform the prisoners that the whole ordeal had

¹¹³ Pérez, “Joaquín de Arredondo, el predomino realista,” 67; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 340; Valerio-Jiménez “Neglected Citizens and Willing Traders,” 271-272; Tom Standage, *An Edible History of Humanity* (New York: Walker and Company, 2009), 153 (quotation).

been a practical joke. When some of the captives failed to find humor in the prank, don Joaquín grew upset.¹¹⁴

Don Joaquín also turned the other cheek when his men took advantage of Nuevo Santander's citizens. In September 1812, for example, the citizens of Altamira complained that Juan Quintero—Cayetano's brother, whom Arredondo had placed in charge of Altamira—was abusing his office. In March 1814, the ayuntamiento of Matamoros complained that Spanish soldiers were stealing livestock and goods. Not only were military authorities permitting the theft, one officer even instructed his men to beat residents if they got in the way. When some women donated corn to Spanish troops, their leader rewarded the gesture by ordering the women to make corn biscuits with the donation. He then authorized his men to punish the women if the meal proved distasteful. Mistreatment of females went beyond this, as sources indicate that Spanish soldiers raped Nuevo Santander's women with virtual impunity while Arredondo was in office.¹¹⁵

The exploitation of females was so extensive that royalist soldiers serving in other provinces abandoned their duties to protect their families and property from Arredondo's men. On May 7, 1813, for example, the division commander of the Provincial Cavalry Corps of Nuevo Santander discovered a group of his soldiers deserting and had them arrested. When the division commander asked the men why they were leaving, they explained that Arredondo had

¹¹⁴ Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 340-342. Bustamante is considered one of the most anti-royalist chroniclers of the Mexican War for Independence, and he may be exaggerating Arredondo's abuses as governor of Nuevo Santander. However, numerous other sources, including the more-impartial Lucas Alamán, also recount stories of Arredondo's midnight marches.

¹¹⁵ Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 340-341; Valerio-Jiménez, "Neglected Citizens and Willing Traders," 272; Christon I. Archer, "Royalist Scourge or Liberator of the Patria? Agustín de Iturbide and Mexico's War of Independence, 1810-1821" *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 24 (Summer 2008), 342; Zorrilla, *Tamaulipas y la guerra de Independencia*, 100-101.

imposed an intolerable tax on their families that had left them starving and unable to make a living. Although the men had fought the urge to return home upon hearing this news, they decided to desert when word arrived that Arredondo's men "had committed atrocious acts that stained the honor of their women." When the division commander heard this excuse, he pardoned the men and granted them leave in order to return to their families. The provincial commander, Agustín Iturbide, would later earn a reputation as a "tyrant" and a "Caesar" when he became the first ruler of independent Mexico. Apparently, Arredondo's actions so disgusted this future Caesar that he forgave a crime often punished by death.¹¹⁶

Unfortunately, the citizens of Nuevo Santander had few means of redressing their grievances with don Joaquín, as governors in northern New Spain controlled their province's judiciary and police force and operated largely independent of the viceroy. Citizens could report abuse in letters to the *audiencia* in Mexico City, but mailed complaints were often ignored. The *audiencia* would listen to aggrieved individuals who spent their personal finances to travel to Mexico City, but even then, it often took years for rulings to take place. This left the citizens of Nuevo Santander to take matters in their own hands. Although there would be no armed opposition to don Joaquín while he served as governor, Nuevo Santander's residents passively resisted. They hid from tax collectors and gave incorrect statements of their personal worth. Local leaders ignored or took their time carrying out the governor's orders.¹¹⁷

In spite of his harsh measures and remorseless jokes, some in Nuevo Santander approved of Arredondo's methodology. Indeed, many criollos in cities found don Joaquín's

¹¹⁶ Archer, "Agustín de Iturbide and Mexico's War of Independence," 342; Timothy E. Anna, "The Rule of Iturbide: A Reappraisal," *Journal of Latin America Studies* 17 (May 1985): 79-110. At the time of the men's arrest, the cavalry was stationed in Querétaro where it was protecting royal shipments.

¹¹⁷ McEnroe, *From Colony to Nationhood*, 186; Arizpe, *Arizpe Report*, 28; Haring, *The Spanish Empire in America*, 141; Valerio-Jiménez "Neglected Citizens and Willing Traders," 271-272.

governing preferable to the racially motivated violence and chaos raging in neighboring provinces. Calleja continued to fight rebels in San Lu s Potos  and insurgents had begun raiding from the Sierra Gordas in the southeast. The situation was even more chaotic south of Nuevo Santander in a region known as the Huasteca.¹¹⁸

The Huasteca had no political borders in 1812. Roughly speaking, it was the hot and humid coastal lowlands dividing Nuevo Santander and Veracruz. Disease was rampant in the Huasteca, as the region's lack of elevation and climate created an ideal breeding ground for mosquitoes. Owing to this insalubrious and uncomfortable environment, few persons of Spanish descent called the Huasteca home, leaving the lowland region populated almost exclusively by Indians and Africans. In 1811, these persons rebelled and, owing to their numerical superiority, defeated all major Spanish armies in the region. Many militiamen abandoned their duties and sided with the insurgents. By 1812, rebels controlled all but one major city in the Huasteca.¹¹⁹

Hoping Arredondo's success in Nuevo Santander would transfer to the rebellion in the Huasteca, in April 1812 Viceroy Venegas named don Joaqu n governor pro-tempore of the Huasteca and ordered the colonial to proceed south. Arredondo declined the appointment, arguing that the insurgents in the Sierra Gordas were more of a threat than the Huasteca rebellion. Don Joaqu n went further. He proposed that Lieutenant-Colonel Ram n D az de Bustamante succeed him as governor of Nuevo Santander. This would free Arredondo of

¹¹⁸ Bustamante, *Cuadro hist rico de la revoluci n mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 342; Mark S. Saka, *For God and Revolution: Priest, Peasant, and Agrarian Socialism in the Mexican Huasteca* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2013), 18.

¹¹⁹ Michael T. Ducey, *A Nation of Villages: Riot and Rebellion in the Mexican Huasteca, 1750-1850* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2004), 14-15, 70-71; Saka, *For God and Revolution*, 9, 14-16, 18.

administrative duties, allowing the colonel to focus all his attention on the Sierra Gorda rebels.¹²⁰

The distant Sierra Gordas did not concern Viceroy Venegas. He wanted an end to the insurgency in the Huasteca, which threatened to spill into central New Spain. As such, the viceroy refused don Joaquín's proposals and ordered the colonel to proceed south to the Huasteca with all deliberate speed. When Arredondo received Venegas's instructions, he ignored them and, instead, mustered his men, and marched towards the Sierra Gordas. Subsequent orders from Venegas were also ignored.¹²¹

Why did don Joaquín disobey Venegas's command? He may have legitimately felt that the Sierra Gorda rebels were a more pressing threat to the security of New Spain than those in the Huasteca. Arredondo argued as much in his replies to Venegas. In the early months of 1812, Captain Alejandro Álvarez de Gutián recaptured Tamasunchale and Matlapán from Huastecan rebels, and General Calleja seized the town of Zitácuaro. The Huasteca situation, therefore, may have appeared under control to don Joaquín. The insurgents in the Sierra Gordas, on the other hand, were growing in number of boldness and had begun raiding in Nuevo Santander. True, they controlled no major towns and had yet to defeat Spanish armies, but they were terrorizing the inhabitants of San Luís Potosí and Nuevo Santander.¹²²

¹²⁰ Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 32-33; Similarly, don Joaquín's fellow royalist commander, General Calleja, offered Viceroy Venegas the opinion that Arredondo should also be made governor of the nearby province of Nuevo León, in order to eliminate the insurgent threat in that province. Arredondo declined this offer, as well.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 33-34; For multiple letters from Venegas to Arredondo ordering him to the Huasteca, see OG, R2.

¹²² Ducey, *A Nation of Villages*, 71-73; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 33-34. The situation in the Huasteca in 1812 remains unclear to historians today and must have been equally as confusing for those receiving reports out of the region in 1812.

There may have been less-sincere motives for Arredondo's insubordination. As a cadet, a young Joaquín had learned to be subordinate to superior officers, but as an adult, he must have seen how insubordination often led to promotion and acclaim in Spanish society. Most famously, in 1518, Hernan Cortés disobeyed orders to remain in Cuba and instead sailed to mainland America, where he conquered the Aztec Empire. Instead of punishing him, the crown rewarded Cortés by promoting him to captain general of New Spain, sending the message that independent action would be punished unless it benefitted the crown. Arredondo, therefore, may have seen stopping the rebels in silver-rich San Luís Potosí as a better career move than subduing the Huasteca. One source claimed that Arredondo refused to move on the Huasteca because he feared that by living closer to Mexico City, royal treasurers would be more likely to audit his accounts—which were presumably unbalanced due to corruption. Another source indicated that climate influenced don Joaquín's decision. Whereas the Huasteca was hot, humid, disease-ridden, and miserable, the elevated Sierra Gordas were cool and pleasant.¹²³

Whatever the motivation, Arredondo ignored the viceroy to deal with insurgents in the Sierra Gordas of nearby San Luís Potosí. The most powerful of the rebels in San Luís Potosí was José María "El Chito" Villagrán. Born of a *petit bourgeois* criollo family in the town of Huichápan, Villagrán was a talented and charismatic bully who had turned to rebellion for a much different reason than any insurgent that Arredondo had faced before. Instead of fighting for social status or enlightened ideology, Villagrán fought to beat a murder rap: he had stabbed

¹²³ Callcott, *Santa Anna*, 9; Jáuregui, "La Guerra de Independencia en el noreste de la Nueva España y el comandante Joaquín de Arredondo." An account of Cortés's actions can be found in numerous histories. For an entertaining recent popular history of the conquest of the Aztecs see, Buddy Levy, *Conquistador: Hernán Cortés, King Montezuma, and the Last Stand of the Aztecs* (New York: Bantam Books, 2008). For a look at the unspoken rules of obedience in Spain's bureaucracy, see John Leddy Phelan, "Authority and Flexibility in the Spanish Imperial Bureaucracy," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 5 (June 1960): 47-65.

his mistress's husband in the back. Because evidence gathered in the wake of the crime proved Villagrán's guilt, in 1810, El Chito and his father broke into Huichápan's jail to destroy the damning case records. To cover up their actions, the Villagrán men claimed they were acting in the spirit of Hidalgo's revolution. After gathering local support, they called for an overthrow of royal authority and took control of Huichápan and surrounding towns. By January 1812, El Chito's men were operating throughout the province of San Luís Potosí. They planned to move into Nuevo Santander next.¹²⁴

To prevent southern Nuevo Santander from falling to Villagrán, in January 1812, don Joaquín sent 170 cavalymen to secure the town of Ríoverde across the border in San Luís Potosí. The army was insufficient. Soon after the cavalry arrived, insurgents attacked Ríoverde and forced Arredondo's men to surrender. Upon hearing the disturbing news, Arredondo gathered supplies and recalled soldiers from other areas of Nuevo Santander. By February 1812, he had assembled a 600-man army, which he planned to use in a three-pronged assault on the rebels in Ríoverde. He would lead one column, Cayetano Quintero another, and local troops a third. After securing Ríoverde, Arredondo would then use the town as a base to attack the insurgents operating in other areas of San Luís Potosí. Before departing Aguayo, don Joaquín named Juan Fermín de Juanicotena interim governor of northern Nuevo Santander. Arredondo remained in charge of the southern portion of the province and would continue to have a final say in all major administrative matters.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ Van Young, *The Other Rebellion*, 180-189.

¹²⁵ Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820; Arredondo to Venegas, February 27, 1812, OG, R3; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 342.

With Fermín looking after his day-to-day government responsibilities, Arredondo and his 600-man army marched southwest towards Ríoverde on February 20, 1812. They crossed into San Luís Potosí shortly thereafter and reached Tula by the end of the month. Anticipating a hard fight ahead, don Joaquín rested his men in Huacal's former stronghold. During the respite, Arredondo received news that Villagrán and 2,000 men were planning to reinforce the rebels in Ríoverde, so the colonel quickly gathered his soldiers and set off in the direction of the contested town. The taxing pace across the sandy, rocky soil of western San Luis Potosí took a toll on men and horses, forcing don Joaquín to rest his army in the village of Valle del Maíz in the fertile foothills of the Sierra Gordas.¹²⁶

Operating out of the Valle del Maíz in March 1812, Arredondo dispatched two divisions with orders to pursue Villagrán and his 2,000-man army. He sent one division under Captain Cao to secure Ríoverde. Although don Joaquín feared retaking Ríoverde would be difficult, Cao captured the town with ease and fortified it in case insurgents returned. The two divisions sent after Villagrán also met with little resistance. Upon hearing that Arredondo was marching against him, El Chito retreated toward Huichapán.¹²⁷

Although Arredondo had planned to stay in Valle del Maíz just long enough to rest his men, the scenic village would end up serving as the colonel's headquarters for the next year. Located on the site of modern-day Ciudad del Maíz, Valle del Maíz was little more than a village, but the surrounding countryside provided plenty of potable water and excellent pasturage for livestock and horses. Valle del Maíz was also located at the edge of the Sierra

¹²⁶ Arredondo to Venegas, February 27, 1812; Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820.

¹²⁷ Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820; Arredondo to Venegas, April 18, 1812, OG, R3; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 35-38.

Gordas, where many insurgents had taken refuge. Part of the Sierra Madre Oriental Range, the Sierra Gordas contain dense deciduous and conifer forests, high peaks, and steep canyons cut by creeks and rivers. Because this diverse geological environment limited the movement of large armies, smaller insurgent bands found the mountains a perfect place to hide from royalist forces. Arredondo recognized the situation soon after arriving in Valle del Maíz, so instead of marching against insurgents in a single army, he deployed smaller cavalry units that would be better able to pursue the rebels into the mountains.¹²⁸

For the next few months, don Joaquín's capable soldiers combed the dense mountainous countryside in search of Villagrán. Although unable to locate El Chito, Arredondo's men captured a number of other prominent rebels. On April 11, for example, soldiers defeated the followers of insurgent Felipe Landaverde, who had been calling himself the "Governor of the Sierra Gorda." Although Landaverde escaped capture, Spanish forces eventually caught up to the man, defeated his army, and confiscated his large supply of artillery and goats. Bolstered by reinforcements sent by Arredondo, forces under Captain Elosúa also captured rebel leader Remigio Alvarado, who had been causing considerable trouble in the area of Querétaro. Informed of Alvarado's capture, don Joaquín ordered his men to escort the rebel leader to Río Verde, where on don Joaquín's instructions Alvarado was hanged.¹²⁹

With no grand army to face and Villagrán silent, Arredondo stayed in Valle de Maíz for the next six months while his trusted officers dealt with rebels in the countryside. Cao, Elosúa, Bilbao, and Quintero proved so efficient at this task that insurgents began arriving in Valle del

¹²⁸ Ducey, *A Nation of Villages*, 74-75; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 342-343.

¹²⁹ Arredondo to Venegas, April 18, 1812, OG, R3; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 343; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 35-38.

Maíz to ask don Joaquín for a pardon. Arredondo granted many of these requests in exchange for information on the rebels who remained in the countryside. With their help, the Spanish subdued most of the forty bands who called the Sierra Madres home by November 1812. The successful operations in the Sierra Gordas did little to satisfy Viceroy Venegas, who continued to insist that the colonel march on the Huasteca. Arredondo replied that he would do so soon. It would not be long before his men had brought Villagrán to justice and cleared the mountains of insurgents.¹³⁰

Don Joaquín's forecast turned out to be premature. After his soldiers discovered an insurgent entrenchment on a hill near Jalpán in early January 1813, Arredondo ordered Captain Elosúa, 120 infantrymen, and 180 cavalrymen to destroy the hideout. On January 5 and January 7, Elosúa tried to dislodge the rebels but was repulsed both times, suffering 7 dead and 30 wounded in the process. Alarmed by a rare defeat, Arredondo dispatched 300 men to aid Elosúa. He maintained fifty cavalry in Valle de Maíz, which he planned to lead against the rebels should Elosúa's forces fail. They did not. When Elosúa returned to the hideout, he discovered the entrenched insurgents were gone. They had joined Villagrán, who was once again on the offensive.¹³¹

For the next two months, Villagrán evaded Arredondo, raided isolated settlements, and faded into the countryside. Jalpán and Landos came under such frequent attacks that village residents begged Arredondo for help. Realizing the settlements were too isolated for Spanish forces to prevent raids, the pragmatic don Joaquín ordered Elosúa to transfer the towns' 300

¹³⁰ Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 343; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 35-38. For more details on Arredondo's time in Valle del Maíz, see OG R2 and OG R3.

¹³¹ Arredondo to Venegas, January 11, 1813, OG, R3; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 38-39; Van Young, *The Other Rebellion*, 188-189.

families to the abandoned, but defensible Lagunillas mission. The Spanish army continued to seek out Villagrán, but by the end of February 1813, it had become apparent that the rebel had once again fled the area, as had almost all remaining insurgents. By March, don Joaquín felt comfortable enough to recall his men from the field.¹³²

Arredondo's onslaught from the east and pressure from Spanish forces in central and northeastern New Spain forced Villagrán to retreat to Huichápan. It was there that a Spanish army under Pedro Monsalve attacked and killed the rebel leader on May 3, 1813. Indeed, Spanish generals were routing insurgent forces throughout New Spain, capturing rebel leaders López Rayón and Francisco Osorno. By the middle of 1813, in fact, there remained only two major centers of rebel activity. In western New Spain, José María Morelos had taken up Hidalgo's ideological mantle and was harassing Spanish targets with a 10,000-man army. The other revolutionary stronghold was Texas, where American filibusters and Mexican insurgents had invaded from the United States and defeated the few Spanish soldiers guarding the province.¹³³

Although a few insurgents still dwelled in the hills surrounding San Luís Potosí, Arredondo realized securing Texas was a more pressing concern to New Spain's security. So in March 1813, don Joaquín placed Lieutenant-Colonel Juanicotena in charge of governing southern Nuevo Santander, abandoned his post at Valle del Maíz, and set off to retake Texas.¹³⁴

¹³² Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 39.

¹³³ Van Young, *The Other Rebellion*, 189; Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas*, Vol. II (San Francisco: The History Company, 1889), 27; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 344-345.

¹³⁴ Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 344-345.

CHAPTER 5

THE BATTLE OF MEDINA, 1813

The fires of a righteous wrath, rolled like burning lava over the patriot forces and scarcely left a man to tell the tale of their ruin.

Rufus McLellan

From the arrival of the first European explorers in the sixteenth century to the outbreak of Hidalgo's revolution, Texas had been a problem for Spain. The province was too big, too hot, too poor, and too far from Mexico City. Texas lacked the mineral wealth that had drawn Spanish settlers to other areas of the New World, and it was home to Indians capable of resisting encroachment on their territory. For these reasons, Spain largely ignored Texas until the turn of the eighteenth century when the French settled the Louisiana Territory. Hoping to arrest French expansion into the more-profitable areas of New Spain, the Spanish sent forth missionaries to convert Texas's Indian population into faithful Catholic, tax-paying citizens. Although most attempts at converting Texas's Indians failed, in 1718 Spain successfully established missions and a small colony in Central Texas known as San Antonio de Béxar.¹³⁵

For the next ninety-two years, Spain tried to grow the population and economy of Texas with little success; few wanted to brave the Indian attacks and horrid living conditions on New Spain's northern frontier for what promised to be a subsistence lifestyle. As such, by 1810, only some 3,000 to 4,000 Canary Islanders, soldiers, ranchers, and converted mission Indians called Texas home. Because New Spain often ignored the concerns of these frontier "Tejanos," the people of Texas had learned to be self-reliant and indifferent to the government in Mexico City.

¹³⁵ Faulk, *Los Paisanos*, 38-39; Gerhard, *The North Frontier of New Spain*, 335-337. For the best survey of Spanish Texas, see Chipman and Joseph, *Spanish Texas*.

Accordingly, when Miguel Hidalgo proclaimed for revolution, retired military officer Juan Bautista de las Casas assumed control of Texas in the name of the insurgency to little protest. Although royalist forces quickly retook Texas from De las Casas, many Tejano elites continued to support revolution.¹³⁶

Insurgents were but one threat to Spain's hold on Texas. Another was the province's proximity to the United States. Spain had controlled the Louisiana Territory east of Texas during the latter half of the eighteenth century, but in 1800, the nation ceded Louisiana to France. France then sold Louisiana to the United States in 1803 without clearly defining the territory's southern border. This led many Americans to conclude that Texas was now a part of the United States, a belief that almost brought Spain and the United States to war in 1806. Cooler heads prevailed in the dispute and the Spanish and Americans settled matters with the Neutral Ground Agreement. According to the compromise, the area between the Sabine River and the Arroyo Hondo was to be an unsettled no-man's-land that would serve as a border between New Spain and the United States.¹³⁷

Although the United States government promised to abide by the Neutral Ground Agreement, many Americans continued to covet land in Texas. Technological innovation and the expansion of African slavery in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries had made cotton cultivation a profitable enterprise. Seeing this, American farmers and land speculators quickly purchased areas in Louisiana capable of growing cotton following the Louisiana

¹³⁶ Jones, *Los Paisanos*, 47-48; Chipman and Joseph, *Spanish Texas*, 246-247. For the most comprehensive treatment of San Antonio's colonial history, see Jesús F. de la Teja, *San Antonio De Béxar: A Community on New Spain's Northern Frontier* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996). There were only four towns in Texas in 1810: San Antonio; Nacogdoches and Trinidad de Salcedo in East Texas; and La Bahía near the Gulf Coast.

¹³⁷ David Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 294-295; Faulk, *The Last Years of Spanish Texas*, 121-122. See also, Chipman and Joseph, *Spanish Texas*, 238.

Purchase in 1803. By 1812, little premium cotton land remained unaccounted for in the United States. Cotton land in under populated Spanish Texas, on the other hand, remained abundant. Because of this, landless American adventurers filled taverns in Louisiana with talk of forcefully taking Texas from Spain.¹³⁸

José Bernardo Maximiliano Gutiérrez de Lara would provide an opportunity to turn this talk into action. Born in the small town of Revilla in Nuevo Santander in 1774, Gutiérrez de Lara was a charming criollo businessperson who shared Miguel Hidalgo's liberal ideals and supported the priest's 1810 revolution in the hopes that it would lead to an independent Mexican republic. Following Hidalgo's execution in 1811, fellow revolutionaries asked Gutiérrez de Lara to petition the United States for aid for the insurgency. In December 1811, Gutiérrez de Lara traveled to Washington, D.C., where he met with United States President James Madison. Although Madison supported the idea of an independent Mexico, he could not risk upsetting Spain at a time when war loomed between the United States and Britain. Although unable to offer financial or military support, Madison did provide Gutiérrez de Lara transportation to New Orleans and a letter of introduction to Louisiana Governor William C. C. Claiborne.¹³⁹

This seemingly poor consolation prize turned out to be significant. Upon arriving in Louisiana in March 1812, Governor Claiborne introduced Gutiérrez de Lara to William Shaler. Either an American agent with secret orders to help bring about New Spain's independence or someone with a strong personal desire to see Texas free of Spanish control, Shaler proposed a

¹³⁸ For an explanation of cotton's role in United States westward expansion, see Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 125-132. For an analysis of role of cotton in American expansion into Texas, see Torget, "Cotton Empire."

¹³⁹ José Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara, "Diary of José Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara, 1811-1812," Elizabeth trans. and ed. Howard West, *The American Historical Review* 34 (October 1928): 55-59; Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*, 234-236. See also José Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara, "Diary of Jose Bernardo Gutierrez de Lara, 1811-1812, II," trans. and ed. Elizabeth Howard West, *The American Historical Review* 34 (January 1929): 281-294.

joint American-Mexican invasion of Texas. Shaler would help Gutiérrez de Lara recruit American volunteers with promises of free land in Texas. With these volunteers, the men would then march on Texas where Gutiérrez de Lara could gather even more recruits. After expelling the meager Spanish military in Texas, Gutiérrez de Lara could then use the province as a conduit to United States weapons and volunteers and as a base from which to bring revolution to the rest of New Spain. Gutiérrez de Lara agreed with Shaler's plan and the two set about recruiting volunteers. Former United States army officer and West Point graduate, Augustus William Magee signed on to the expedition, as did 130 American adventurers hoping for land in Texas.¹⁴⁰

After gathering supplies, Gutiérrez de Lara and his new "Republican Army of the North" crossed into Texas on August 8, 1812 and had little difficulty taking the meagerly defended East Texas towns of Nacogdoches and Trinidad de Salcedo. News of the victories sent pro-revolution Tejanos, loot-seeking Lipan Apache and Tonkawa Indians, and additional land hungry Americans flocking to Gutiérrez de Lara's banner, swelling the Republican Army of the North's ranks to almost 1,000 men. At the head of his new army, Gutiérrez de Lara took La Bahía in December 1812 and the capital of Texas, San Antonio, on April 1, 1813. Once in San Antonio, Gutiérrez de Lara proclaimed himself the president of a new provisional republican government for Texas and announced, "the bonds that kept us bound to the dominion of Spain have been severed forever." He then allowed his men to execute a number of Spanish officials, including the

¹⁴⁰ Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*, 234-236. Gutiérrez de Lara's recollection of the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition can be found in *Papers of Mirabeau Bonaparte Lamar* Vol. I, 4-29.

governor of Texas and Simón de Herrera, next in line to be Commandant General of the Eastern Internal Provinces.¹⁴¹

Arredondo first learned of Gutiérrez de Lara's expedition while stationed in the Valle del Maíz in January 1813. Although he had been promising Viceroy Venegas that he would move on the Huasteca for almost a year, don Joaquín decided that the situation in Texas required his attention. The choice made military sense. The presence of Americans in Gutiérrez de Lara's army, the province's proximity to the United States, and growing support from neighboring provinces made the insurgency in Texas more dangerous than what was happening in the Huasteca. On a personal level, taking Texas also made sense for Arredondo; a victory over an American and criollo army would bring more prestige than defeating Indian brigands in the Huasteca. When news reached the Valle del Maíz that the revolutionaries were threatening San Antonio, don Joaquín knew he had to take action. He informed Viceroy Venegas that he was heading to Texas with or without his approval, placed Lieutenant-Colonel Juanicotena in charge of governing southern Nuevo Santander and returned double-speed to Aguayo to recruit men and horses for a Texas campaign.¹⁴²

Viceroy Venegas grew incensed when he learned of his subordinate's disobedience, but could do nothing about it. After concluding Venegas was not up to the task of defeating the insurgency, the audiencia in Mexico City relieved the viceroy of his command on March 4, 1813. Arredondo's fellow military officer, Félix María Calleja, replaced him. When don Joaquín learned that the man who had helped him defeat Bernardo Gómez de Lara was the new

¹⁴¹ Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*, 236-239 (quotation on page 239); *Papers of Mirabeau Bonaparte Lamar*, Vol. I, 12-13.

¹⁴² Garrett, *Green Flag over Texas*, 206-207; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 62, 64; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 345; Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820.

viceroy, he became “full of jubilation and joy” and dispatched a letter of congratulations to his comrade in arms. Calleja responded with an approval of Arredondo’s plans to retake Texas. The two officers would grow to respect and count on one another over the coming two years.¹⁴³

Although he would no longer feud with Venegas, Arredondo soon had a new enemy: the governor of Nuevo León, Lieutenant Colonel Ramón Díaz de Bustamante. In a series of letters to Calleja, don Joaquín blamed the elderly Bustamante for the state of the insurgency in northeastern New Spain. According to Arredondo, Bustamante was harboring deserters from his army, in spite of his requests for their return. The governor had also offered sanctuary to Captain Vidal de Lorca. Arredondo had arrested Lorca in early 1813 for rebel sympathies, but the prisoner escaped and fled to Bustamante’s protection in Nuevo León. Don Joaquín suspected that Lorca had a strong influence over Bustamante, and that he was using the governor to sabotage efforts to restore order in New Spain.¹⁴⁴

Of further irritation to don Joaquín, Bustamante commanded almost 1,000 militiamen but had taken no action against Gutiérrez de Lara. In Arredondo’s eyes, this made Bustamante incompetent, a coward, and undeserving of his office. Don Joaquín let his feelings be known in a letter informing Bustamante that he would soon be entering his province with the intention of saving it from revolution. The governor could do nothing to stop him. Arredondo’s accusations and braggadocio infuriated Bustamante. The governor fired off a series of letters claiming that don Joaquín was using the situation in Texas for political ends. He then reminded

¹⁴³ Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*, 241; Garrett, *Green Flag over Texas*, 207-209; Jiménez, “Loyalist Officer in New Spain,” 59; Arredondo to Calleja, March 30, 1813, OG, R4 (quotation).

¹⁴⁴ Arredondo to Calleja, March, 20, 1813, OG, R4; Jiménez, “Loyalist Officer in New Spain,” 60; González, *Colección de noticias y documentos para la historia del estado de N. León*, 339.

don Joaquín that Texas was not his jurisdiction and recommended that the colonel continue fighting rebels in San Luís Potosí.¹⁴⁵

The infuriated governor changed his tone upon hearing that the Republican Army of the North had taken San Antonio. Fearing that the invaders would next move on his capital in Monterrey, Bustamante wrote Arredondo, begging him to march on Texas. The governor claimed that he would meet don Joaquín in Laredo with supplies and soldiers. Before the proposed meeting could take place, however, the elderly Bustamante died.¹⁴⁶

With Bustamante dead, Venegas out of office, and Calleja as viceroy, don Joaquín faced no more political impediments, but he still lacked the manpower and supplies needed to confront Gutiérrez de Lara's growing army. To discourage support for the insurgency and to recruit men, Arredondo launched a propaganda campaign when he arrived in Aguayo in March 1813. Because there were no printing presses in northeastern New Spain, don Joaquín sent out handwritten fliers warning citizens that Gutiérrez de Lara was in league with Napoleon and his true intention was to wrest the eastern provinces from Spain in order to join them to the United States. Spanish citizens were to become "vile slaves" to these "stranger dog[s] without religion, and with customs very different than your own." Don Joaquín's proclamation threatened that any town supporting the rebels would, "be put to fire and sword and nothing will remain of it but ruins to serve as a lesson for the future and a warning to malicious rebels."

¹⁴⁵ Garrett, *Green Flag over Texas*, 207-208; Chipman, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*, 241.

¹⁴⁶ Garrett, *Green Flag over Texas*, 207-208; Chipman, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*, 241; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 63, 67.

Like most Spanish propaganda, Arredondo's fliers were "sensationalistic, extremely biased, and larded with purple language vilifying insurgent military figures."¹⁴⁷

They also seem to have been ineffective. Arredondo hoped that his propaganda would encourage the citizens of Nuevo Santander to join militias or enlist in the military. When recruits failed to show in sufficient numbers, don Joaquín tried more extreme measures. He had those capable of serving who attempted to avoid enlistment brought before a military tribunal. The bishop of Monterrey supported recruitment efforts by offering indulgences to those who enlisted. He also threatened that for every month a soldier did not serve in the military they would suffer 1,000 years in purgatory. Even using these aggressive methods, Arredondo's ranks did not increase significantly. His forces still consisted of the Battalion of Veracruz, some Nuevo Santander soldiers, and Cayetano Quintero and his militia. At least neighboring provinces and towns within Nuevo Santander supplied money and supplies for the war effort. The intendants of San Luís Potosí and Zacatecas sent hard currency, while the commandant of Tampico supplied artillery pieces. The merchants of Altamira, however, made the biggest contribution, lending Arredondo 40,000 pesos.¹⁴⁸

When word reached Arredondo that the insurgents had captured San Antonio, he realized that he would have to make do with the men he had on hand and hope that Calleja could send reinforcements. To prevent the revolutionaries from expanding deeper into New Spain, don Joaquín ordered the military captain of Laredo—just south of the Texas border—to

¹⁴⁷ Garrett, *Green Flag over Texas*, 209; Proclamation of Joaquín de Arredondo, in Robert D. Wood trans. and ed., *The History of Mexico in the Laredo Archives, 1809-1845* (Laredo, Tex.: Laredo Archives Series, 2000), 9-10 (first and second quotations); Van Young, *The Other Rebellion*, 348-349 (third quotation on page 348).

¹⁴⁸ Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 67; Garrett, *Green Flag over Texas*, 209; Edward Austin Bradley, "Forgotten Filibusters: Private Hostile Expeditions from the United States into Spanish Texas, 1812-1821" (Ph.D. diss. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1999), 136; Arredondo to Juan Fermin de Juanicotena, April 26, 1813, OG, R4.

build a massive fortification. Arredondo and his army then departed Aguayo for Laredo on April 6, 1813. As they rode, the green vegetation of central Nuevo Santander faded away in favor of flat, hardscrabble, chaparral-covered dirt.¹⁴⁹

During this ride, Arredondo ordered a contingent of his men to Revilla, where they were to arrest Gutiérrez de Lara's wife and children and seize all of their possessions. The soldiers arrived too late; the Gutiérrez de Lara family had just left to join their patriarch in San Antonio. Arredondo's men did confiscate 4,200 pesos, a number of books, and the house itself.¹⁵⁰

Any disappointment that Arredondo felt from missing the Gutiérrez de Lara family likely faded away when he received exciting news from Viceroy Calleja. Impressed by don Joaquín's persistence and initiative, Calleja promoted the colonel to brigadier general and named him Commandant General of the Eastern Internal Provinces. Calleja also named Arredondo sub inspector of the Eastern Internal Provinces, thereby placing him in charge of all troops in Nuevo León, Coahuila, Texas, and Nuevo Santander. Should Simón de Herrera have survived Gutiérrez de Lara's takeover of Texas, Arredondo would have to relinquish his commandant general title, but he would still be sub inspector. This last point, however, was moot as Herrera was already dead when Calleja wrote the order. In addition to the promotion, the viceroy promised 1,000 troops from Spain to aid in taking Texas.¹⁵¹

As Commandant General of the Eastern Internal Provinces, Arredondo would be responsible for military and civil matters in Nuevo Santander, Texas, Nuevo León, and Coahuila. The commandant general coordinated military campaigns, imposed taxes, supervised civic

¹⁴⁹ Ramiro Sanchez, *Frontier Odyssey: Early Life in a Texas Spanish Town* (Austin: San Felipe Press, 1981), 64-65; Gerhard, *The North Frontier of New Spain*, 335.

¹⁵⁰ Garrett, *Green Flag over Texas*, 209; Chipman, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*, 242.

¹⁵¹ Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 66.

projects, and various other tasks in these provinces. When initially envisioned, the main purpose of the commandant general was to deal with hostile native groups, but the onset of revolution had changed this role somewhat. In addition to combating Indians, don Joaquín now had to coordinate the fight against insurgents and maintain peace among the provinces' approximately 161,000 inhabitants. At the time of don Joaquín's ascension, this population included some 51,000 persons of Spanish descent, 37,000 Indians, 36,000 mestizos, and 37,000 "of other castes," which probably meant persons of African descent and unincorporated Indian tribes.¹⁵²

The commandant general was subordinate to the king, but his status in relation to the viceroy of New Spain varied throughout the colonial period. Initially, the commandant general was an independent office who had to report to, but not obey, the viceroy, but in 1786, the commandant general became a sub office in the viceroyalty of New Spain. The comandancy general then went through a series of changes that clouded the official chain of command. In 1789, Viceroy Manuel Flores divided the Internal Provinces into an east and a west section. Coahuila, Nuevo León, Texas, and Nuevo Santander made up the eastern provinces, California, New Mexico, Nueva Vizcaya, Sonora, and Chihuahua, the west. The provinces were reunited in 1791, but once again divided in 1804. This change, however, was not implemented due to the Napoleonic Wars. Therefore, Arredondo would be the first to serve in the newly separated Eastern Internal Provinces.¹⁵³

¹⁵² Thomas D. Hall, *Social Change in the Southwest, 1350-1880* (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1989), 138-139; Benavides, "Loss by Division," 204; McEnroe, *From Colony to Nationhood*, 201.

¹⁵³ Noel M. Loomis, "Commandants-General of the Interior Provinces: A Preliminary List, *Arizona and the West* 11 (Autumn 1969): 261-263; Hall, *Social Change in the Southwest*, 138-142. For more on the commandant general office, see Luis Navarro Garcia, *Don José de Galvez y la comandancia general de las provincias internas del norte de Nueva España* (Sevilla: Consejo de Investigaciones Científicas, 1964).

A commandant inspector would serve under Arredondo and be responsible for touring the frontier for potential problems. The governors of Texas and Coahuila were directly subordinate to Arredondo, while the governors of Nuevo León and Nuevo Santander reported to the viceroy. In practice, however, the governor of Nuevo León would be under Arredondo's authority. Although previous commandant generals had accepted their position as subordinate to the viceroy, don Joaquín interpreted the position as one independent of everyone but the king.¹⁵⁴

The new commandant general of the Eastern Internal Provinces arrived in the small town of Laredo at the end of May and set up camp to await the 1,000 soldiers promised by Calleja. While waiting, news arrived that there had been uprisings in nearby Refugio and Vallecillo, forcing Arredondo to dispatch cavalymen to put down the revolts. This left few men to defend Laredo should the revolutionaries attack from Texas. Fortunately, 700 local militiamen commanded by Colonel Ignacio Elizondo arrived in Laredo shortly thereafter.¹⁵⁵

Elizondo was a wealthy criollo from Nuevo León who had spent ten years in the Spanish military campaigning against hostile Indians before retiring to a ranch near Monclova, Coahuila. When revolution came in 1810, Elizondo initially sided with the insurgency, but joined the royalists when denied promotion in the revolutionary army. Elizondo then led a counterrevolution against the insurgent-friendly governor of Coahuila and set a trap for insurgent leaders Miguel Hidalgo and Ignacio Allende. Unaware that Elizondo had abandoned the revolutionary cause, Hidalgo and Allende accepted an invitation from Elizondo inviting the

¹⁵⁴ Hall, *Social Change in the Southwest*, 138-139; Benavides, "Loss by Division," 204.

¹⁵⁵ González, *Colección de noticias y documentos para la historia del estado de Nuevo León*, 340; Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 68, 71; Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*, 242; Garrett, *Green Flag over Texas*, 210.

two leaders to meet him at a well in Coahuila. When Hidalgo, Allende, and their insurgent forces arrived, Elizondo and a royalist army attacked the group, killing 40 and taking 893 prisoners, including Hidalgo and Allende. Elizondo then took the revolutionary leaders to Chihuahua where they were executed. This betrayal of the rebellion earned Elizondo the nickname “the traitor” among Mexican historians. After Hidalgo’s death, Elizondo and his forces remained in Coahuila until Arredondo called upon the men to join his army in Laredo.¹⁵⁶

Arredondo would use Elizondo in his first action against Gutiérrez de Lara. At the beginning of June 1813, don Joaquín ordered Elizondo to take a few hundred of his militiamen and camp on the Frio River seventy miles south of San Antonio. From there, Elizondo was directed to observe the rebel forces and gather information that may be useful in defeating the enemy. Elizondo was not, as Arredondo made explicitly clear, to engage the revolutionary army in battle or to attempt to capture San Antonio. With these instructions, Elizondo crossed into Texas on June 12, 1813.¹⁵⁷

Six days later Elizondo sent a report to Arredondo explaining that he had violated orders on almost every count. He had captured two small enemy outposts, made camp only one-half mile from San Antonio, offered a pardon to insurgents who would surrender, and was preparing to lay siege to the capital. According to Elizondo, he had done this because some rebel deserters had informed him that Gutiérrez’s de Lara’s army was in the midst of fleeing to Louisiana—a false assertion. Hearing of Elizondo’s disobedience, Arredondo grew incensed. An Elizondo victory would rob him of personal glory, while a defeat would reduce men and

¹⁵⁶ Henderson, *The Mexican Wars for Independence*, 101-102.

¹⁵⁷ Bradley, “Forgotten Filibusters,” 126; Garrett, *Green Flag over Texas*, 212; González, *Colección de noticias y documentos para la historia del estado de Nuevo León*, 339-341.

supplies for his own attack. Don Joaquín chastised his subordinate and commanded him to halt all operations until he arrived in Texas. The commandant general did, however, dispatch most of his remaining cavalry to support Elizondo in case of a rebel attack.¹⁵⁸

The arrival of Elizondo's army had sent fear and excitement through the insurgent ranks. Some suggested fleeing. The voice that won the day, however, was Henry Perry, a brash American army officer whose desire for land in Texas would lead him to multiple filibustering expeditions. Perry had become de facto commander of the American portion of the Republican Army of the North following Augustus Magee's death a few months prior. Unaccustomed to urban warfare, Perry called on the men of the Republican Army of the North to meet Elizondo's army in open field battle. Perry's voice won out. On July 19, Perry and nine hundred rebels departed San Antonio, and the next morning attacked Elizondo and his men as they were attending mass. Side-by-side, the combined Anglo-Mexican forces made short work of Elizondo's army in an engagement that would come to be known as the Battle of Alazán. Under heavy fire, the royalists scattered in all directions, leaving almost all of their supplies behind. Elizondo had two horses shot from underneath him as he fled to the Rio Grande to send news of his defeat to Arredondo.¹⁵⁹

Still in Laredo awaiting reinforcements from the viceroy, Arredondo was furious when he learned of Elizondo's defeat. He ordered the disgraced officer to take the surviving members of his army and meet him at a place called Cañada de Caballos—approximately eighty miles southwest of San Antonio. There the two forces were to combine and develop a plan of attack.

¹⁵⁸ Garrett, *Green Flag over Texas*, 212-213; Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*, 242.

¹⁵⁹ Garrett, *Green Flag over Texas*, 214; Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*, 244.

The commandant general also ordered Elizondo to punish those among his troops who had been the first to flee combat. These men were to be stripped of their standards, have decorations removed from their uniforms, and be forced to wear a white armband marked with the letter “C” for *cobarde*, or coward. The men could remove the armband only after proving their bravery.¹⁶⁰

This sort of discipline was a staple of Arredondo’s military career. One of don Joaquín’s favorite sayings was, “Punish cowardice and wickedness; reward bravery and virtue.” He expected his soldiers to perform their duties with valor. When they did, the commandant general was quick to dole out commendations and promotions. When they did not, Arredondo reprimanded them. In one instance north of Laredo, for example, a number of soldiers under José María Navaira fled when surprised by a group of insurgents. The five men that stayed with their leader received commendations from Arredondo when they made their way back to town. The commandant general had those who fled stand before the rest of the army in shame. He then informed them that they were unworthy of their uniforms, which he took away. The commandant general then forced the men to work on public projects.¹⁶¹

Although they had defeated Elizondo with ease, the rebel victory in Texas was proving to be pyrrhic, as relations between the American filibusters and the Mexican revolutionaries had rapidly deteriorated following the battle. This development, however, had been long in the making. When the two ethnic groups first met, strong leadership bridged race and language barriers. American leader Augustus Magee was particularly influential in maintaining cohesion between the two groups, but he had died early in 1813, leaving Gutiérrez de Lara to make most

¹⁶⁰ Bradley, “Forgotten Filibusters,” 136; Jiménez, “Loyalist Officer in New Spain,” 75.

¹⁶¹ Jiménez, “Loyalist Officer in New Spain,” 70-71 (quotation on page 70).

of the Republican Army of the North's decisions. Without Magee's advice, Gutiérrez de Lara took actions that upset the American members of the expedition: he authorized the execution of unarmed Spanish officials and declared that Texas would not be joining the United States. Neither would Texas be independent. It would become a part of Mexico once the colony gained independence. Believing the executions violated the rules of war and upset that their dream of a United States controlled Texas had been shattered, many Americans quit the Republican Army of the North and returned to the United States.¹⁶²

Gutiérrez de Lara's decisions particularly upset William Shaler, a former sea captain and current American agent in Louisiana. Shaler had assisted Gutiérrez de Lara's preparations to invade Texas in 1812, but when news reached Louisiana that the insurgent commander had dismissed the possibility of joining Texas to the United States, Shaler decided to undermine Gutiérrez de Lara in the hopes of replacing him with José Álvarez de Toledo. Toledo was a Cuban who had been a representative to the Spanish Cortés in Cádiz in 1811. He was also an ally to the United States, the nation having provided Toledo aid in his efforts to gain independence for Cuba. In order to have Toledo take over the Republican Army of the North, then, Shaler printed propaganda questioning Gutiérrez de Lara's leadership ability. Toledo then distributed this propaganda on his way from Louisiana to join the Republican Army of the North in San Antonio in the summer of 1813. Upon arriving in the Texas capital on August 1, 1813, Toledo claimed to be a representative of the United States government and the Spanish Cortés. These credentials, dissatisfaction with Gutiérrez de Lara, effective propaganda, and Toledo's charm saw the men of the Republican Army of the North call a junta, where they decided to

¹⁶² Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*, 237-239, 244-245

replace Gutiérrez de Lara with Toledo. Dejected and with his dreams of leading the revolution dashed, Gutiérrez de Lara packed his bags and set off to Louisiana. In a way, the junta's decision was a gift in disguise. Toledo would have to deal with the bickering American and Mexican factions of the Republican Army of the North, and he would be the one to face Arredondo and the Spanish army that had just entered Texas.¹⁶³

The reinforcements promised by Calleja arrived in Laredo in late July. Because the Regiment of Savoy was engaged in other areas of New Spain, the viceroy instead dispatched the Regiment of Extremadura, veterans of the Napoleonic Wars who had only recently arrived in the New World. Potentially, the addition of the military veterans could be a problem. With the new arrivals, Arredondo's army now consisted of peninsular soldiers, members of the army of New Spain, and local militia, men with different homelands, ethnicities, and economic backgrounds. One historian noted that Arredondo's army, "drew from the broadest population in the history of the region." Don Joaquín, himself, regarded his men as an "unruly mob." European troops often regarded themselves as superior to their New World counterparts and often expected to take over positions of command. Soldiers in New Spain's army obviously valued their place in the chain of command and did not want to relinquish power to recent arrivals. Militiamen, such as Arredondo's confidant Cayetano Quintero, often served voluntarily and would leave if they thought they were not properly represented. Arredondo, born in Spain but having served in New Spain for ten years, seems to have been a perfect commander to bring these eclectic groups together. He retained his militiamen and New Spain army veterans as high-ranking officers, but he also found similar positions for officers from the Extremadura

¹⁶³ Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*, 237-239, 244-245; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 76.

Regiment. This strategy apparently had its desired effect, as evidence of discord between the varied groups of soldiers has not been found.¹⁶⁴

With the new battle-hardened veterans of the Extremadura Regiment at his command, Arredondo departed Laredo on July 26 for the 150-mile march to San Antonio. Traveling on the royal road afforded a bleak look at the land north of Laredo, a land that Arredondo described as “naked.” Knee-high shrubs, prickly cacti, and scratchy chaparral provided the only cover in the sandy, harsh environment. Animals in the region were dangerous, with mountain lions and poisonous rattlesnakes abundant. In the summer, temperatures in this region could reach 111 degrees in August, which could cause dehydration and heat stroke. Closer to San Antonio, cactus-covered desert gave way to rolling hills, scattered oak trees, and low-level creeks. The Spanish army probably saw few, if any, fellow Spaniards on the trip, as not many chose to live in this inhospitable land. Those soldiers who did make human contact probably wished they had not, as the only persons that the Spanish army reported encountering were Comanche Indians who stole from their herds.¹⁶⁵

At the end of July, Arredondo’s northward-moving forces met with southbound Elizondo and the remnants of his army at the designated rally point, Cañada de Caballos. Supplemented by Elizondo’s remaining men, the Spanish army now numbered 1,830 men, consisting of 635 infantry and 1,195 cavalry. Because Elizondo’s forces had served exclusively in the Internal Provinces and were more accustomed to using the guerrilla-tactics that were effective in

¹⁶⁴ Bradley, “Forgotten Filibusters,” 137; McEnroe, *From Colony to Nationhood*, 187 (quotations); Richard Boyer and Geoffrey Spurling ed. *Colonial Lives: Documents on Latin American History, 1550-1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 307; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 347.

¹⁶⁵ Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*, 245; Arredondo, “Joaquín de Arredondo's Report of the Battle of the Medina,” 221; Jones, *Los Paisanos*, 38-39; Gerhard, *The North Frontier of New Spain*, 335; Bradley, “Forgotten Filibusters,” 137.

fighting Indians, Arredondo spent a few days at Cañada de Caballos teaching his new recruits European battle formations. He also initiated this group—many of whom were barefoot and clad in only breech-clout—with intense exercising. By the time the now-disciplined army moved north in mid-August, “they had made themselves feared.”¹⁶⁶

On August 16, Arredondo and his men camped just south of the Medina River. Suspecting that the revolutionaries had learned of his army’s approach, don Joaquín dispatched a corporal and four soldiers to scout the road to San Antonio. The men discovered that, in fact, the rebel army of some 1,600 men had left San Antonio to meet the Spanish, but the scouts were unable to find their camp. There was a reason for this: Toledo had been discreet. Having received word that Arredondo was on his way, the rebel commander set up an ambush in a treeless field. If things went according to plan, when the Spanish army passed through the plain on their way to San Antonio, the American artillery would open fire, causing massive damage. The revolutionaries were so confident in their strategy, that they concocted an expletive-filled song about what they would do with the “one-eyed” Arredondo after they defeated him in battle.¹⁶⁷

In the early morning hours of August 18, Arredondo dispatched Ignacio Elizondo with 180 cavalry scouts. His orders were to locate the revolutionaries and observe their numbers, but to avoid combat unless he was certain of victory. If Elizondo and his men came under fire,

¹⁶⁶ Bradley, “Forgotten Filibusters,” 126; Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men and Women*, 245; Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820; Arredondo, “Arredondo’s Report of the Battle of the Medina,” 221-222 (quotation on page 221). See also, Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 348.

¹⁶⁷ Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men and Women*, 245; Jiménez, “Loyalist Officer in New Spain,” 79; Arredondo, “Arredondo’s Report of Battle of Medina,” 221-222; Schwarz, *Forgotten Battlefield*, 115. The exact number of troops in the Spanish army is a matter of dispute, as Arredondo reports that they were more than 2,000 strong. Arredondo is the only one to offer this number, and it is likely that he did so to make his eventual victory more spectacular.

they were to retreat, firing their weapons while doing so to warn of the enemy's approach.

With this information, Elizondo and the cavalry departed.¹⁶⁸

Three hours later, Ensign Francisco López became separated from the rest of Elizondo's cavalry and stumbled on the Republican Army of the North's location. Toledo had set up an ambush around a small prairie, hoping to surprise the royalists on their way to San Antonio. Fearing that López would reveal their location, insurgent leader Miguél Menchaca ordered his men to fire on the Spanish soldier before he could get word to the rest of his army. Fire rang out around López, but miraculously, the ensign escaped harm long enough to regroup with the rest of the scouts. The royalists then returned the republicans' fire, but were almost surrounded after the rebels charged. The Spanish cavalry then barely escaped a second charge. In the midst of this fighting, Elizondo dispatched a messenger to Arredondo informing him of his predicament. Don Joaquín responded by sending 150 men and 2 cannons under Lieutenant Colonel Manuel Zambrano to support the besieged royalists' retreat. By the time these men arrived, however, the engagement had ceased, and the reinforcements themselves came under fire. Leaving their two cannons behind, the reinforcements joined the scouts in retreating. Believing the 150-man reinforcements to be the remainder of the Spanish army, Toledo ordered his men to pursue the fleeing royalists.¹⁶⁹

After dispatching Zambrano and his men, Arredondo prepared the rest of his army for battle. He abandoned the supply train that followed the army and took his remaining troops—numbering some 1,300 men without Elizondo and Zambrano's forces—and marched in the

¹⁶⁸ Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 79; Arredondo, "Arredondo's Report of Battle of Medina," 222.

¹⁶⁹ Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 80; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 348-349; Arredondo, "Arredondo's Report of Battle of Medina," 223.

direction of San Antonio. Finding a densely wooded area, don Joaquín formed his infantry in a defensive, V-shaped, line, supported this line with cavalry; and placed his artillerymen along the line's flanks. He hoped the oncoming rebels would enter the open-end of the "V," which would leave them susceptible to fire from multiple angles. Some sources indicate that Arredondo set up fortified barriers camouflaged with chaparral, but it is not clear if the commandant general would have had time to have done so. Nevertheless, with his line in place, Arredondo ordered his men to hold their fire until the insurgents were within pistol range—about forty yards.¹⁷⁰

With his army in place, Arredondo waited. Because they were mounted and most of the rebels were on foot, Elizondo, Zambrano, and their cavalrymen returned to the Spanish army having successfully avoided further contact with the approaching rebels. Heavy cannons also slowed the advancing republican army, as dragging artillery through the sandy soil and extreme heat of the August sun was a laborious task. Eventually, the rebels abandoned many of their cannons after their wheels became stuck in the sand. Tired and thirsty from the chase, many rebels began to question their pursuit of the Spanish army, believing the best approach would be to return to the original ambush spot where they could reform their lines, rest, and rehydrate. Toledo considered this plan, but dismissed it after American leader Samuel Kemper and Mexican officer Colonel Miguél Menchaca publicly countermanded his orders. Menchaca

¹⁷⁰ Schwarz, *Forgotten Battlefield*, 88, 92, 99-100; Bradley, "Forgotten Filibusters," 138; Arredondo, "Arredondo's Report of Battle of Medina," 224. Ted Schwarz in *Forgotten Battlefield* contended that Arredondo had no time to set up an ambush after being informed of the inevitable rebel attack. He came to this conclusion because all of the American combatants state that the two armies just came upon one another. Schwarz believed persons like John Sibley who wanted to temper the failure of the Gutierrez-Magee expedition later contrived the idea of an ambush. In Schwarz's view, the contemporary press and later historians picked up on Sibley's explanation and it became ingrained in history. The problem with Schwarz's view here is his definition of ambush. Arredondo may not have had time to set up elaborate defensive fortifications as some sources say, but he did know of the oncoming army and did have enough time to line up his men and prepare his artillery. The rebels came upon an army larger than they believed, were less prepared than their enemy, and did not know the battle formation of the Spanish army. This would meet most definitions of falling into an ambush. See also Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas*, Vol. II, 29-31.

went further, rousing his men to action and encouraging them forward. The enthusiastic speech inspired, but Toledo's apprehension, bickering between the Mexican and American factions, and the heat of the August sun still left the insurgents thirsty, divided, exhausted, and weak. Indeed, the men were so tired, that they failed to notice that they had just walked into a trap.¹⁷¹

Concealed by trees and chaparral, the Spanish army watched as the insurgents walked into the open end of their "V" formation and, per Arredondo's orders, held their fire until the rebels were within pistol shot. When the insurgents reached this distance, the Spanish army opened fire causing "utter astonishment" to the oncoming force. Cannon balls, musket shot, and shrapnel tore into the republicans, inflicting heavy casualties and raising confusion and fear among the insurgent ranks. The Apache and Tonkawa Indians who had joined the rebels for loot immediately fled the field, as did numerous Mexican infantrymen. Many of those who remained were too afraid to advance or return fire. Although Colonel Menchaca rallied the Mexican infantry and cavalry and marched gallantly into the onslaught, this advance ended when grapeshot shredded Colonel Menchaca's neck and ended his life. After two more failed advances, the remaining Mexican portion of the Republican Army of the North turned to retreat.¹⁷²

The Americans and cavalrymen under Toledo, however, pushed through the fire, "with the fury of Mad-men." They limited the effectiveness of the Spanish artillery by picking off soldiers when they went to fire their cannons. The Americans even managed to capture two

¹⁷¹ Schwarz, *Forgotten Battlefield*, 89, 93-95.

¹⁷² Schwarz, *Forgotten Battlefield*, 100; Bradley, "Forgotten Filibusters," 140; *Papers of Mirabeau Bonaparte Lamar* Vol. I, 283 (quotation); Arredondo, "Report of Battle of Medina," 225-226.

pieces of artillery, and at one point Samuel Kemper was able to move some cannons within fifty yards of the Spanish line. But while Arredondo's forces fell back, they did not retreat. After Menchaca fell, Toledo and some of his men charged the royalists rear guard, but sustained heavy losses in what would ultimately be a failed effort. Don Joaquín saw Toledo's approach and ordered an auxiliary unit to meet the insurgents head on. In a later report to the viceroy, Arredondo claimed that Toledo's maneuver would have been successful, but the insurgent leader "was not so quick in his movements as I was in commanding an advance guard sent out on both wings."¹⁷³

As the battle raged, Arredondo remained behind the lines issuing orders through trusted men like Juan María Martínez, José María Céspedes, and his brother-in-law Nicolás del Moral. These men would listen to Arredondo's instructions, relay them to commanders in the field, receive a detailed report of the changing conditions of the battle, and report them back to the commandant general. Don Joaquín would then send the men with new orders for the front lines. Although Arredondo was not on the front lines, he was still in danger. Toledo's attempted flanking, for example, would have cut off any chance for the commandant general to escape. And in one instance, an enemy combatant had Arredondo in his gun sights. A corporal from the Nuevo Santander militia, Mateo Sotello, saved the commandant general at the last minute by warning him of the danger. Although under fire, it does not appear that Arredondo personally took up arms in the battle.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ *Papers of Mirabeau Bonaparte Lamar*, Vol. I, 283 (first quotation); Bradley, "Forgotten Filibusters," 140; Arredondo, "Arredondo's Report of Battle of Medina," 225 (second quotation).

¹⁷⁴ Arredondo, "Arredondo's Report of Battle of Medina," 229.

In the face of the rebel onslaught, Arredondo's men demonstrated superb training and discipline. While being fired upon by the Americans, his artillery continued to do their duty, launching 950 cannonballs throughout the conflict. Spanish officers, too, displayed a cool demeanor while ordering their men in battle, and many men continued to fight in spite of suffering serious wounds. Arredondo proclaimed that the wounded did not wish to leave the ranks and did so only when they were, "so weak from the loss of blood that they fell." One man, Miguel Pagés, demonstrated this courage by carrying off the wounded from the front lines, tending to their wounds, and then returning to the front line to encourage the men and distribute ammunition.¹⁷⁵

Although Arredondo would later report that he had total command of the field, there is some indication that victory was not inevitable. Supposedly, at one point in the battle, the field became so dense with smoke from artillery fire, that Arredondo could not see what was around him. At the same time, Anglo sharpshooters picked off many of the soldiers manning the cannons, thereby halting the booming that had resounded throughout the battle. Some Americans took advantage of this situation by pressing the Spanish lines. Some sources claim that Arredondo, unable to spot his cavalry or hear his artillery, feared that the day was lost, mounted a fresh horse in case it was necessary to flee to the Rio Grande, and prepared to issue a retreat order. He belayed this order when a rebel officer named Múzquiz switched sides and informed the commandant general that the Spanish were, in fact, winning the battle handily. Another account has Arredondo abandoning his plan to retreat when the smoke lifted and it became clear that only a few Americans remained on the battlefield. It is not known if don

¹⁷⁵Arredondo, "Arredondo's Report of Battle of Medina," 229-231 (quotation on page 231).

Joaquín actually contemplated retreat or if republican survivors contrived the story to make their defeat more palatable.¹⁷⁶

Either way, when it became clear that his army was routing the enemy, Arredondo ordered his band to play music. This revitalized his men, and discouraged and confused the remaining insurgents. Even the most optimistic of the republican army realized the battle was lost. As the rebel artillerymen began to abandon their cannons, Arredondo ordered the equipment seized by his infantrymen in a pincer-like movement. He had one detachment advance on the right for this purpose and another do so on the left. The commandant general then ordered his cavalry to chase down those fleeing the field—they quickly overtook insurgent infantrymen, but Perry, Kemper, Toledo, and others on horseback successfully escaped the field. Nevertheless, after a four-hour struggle, Arredondo and his men were, “masters of the enemy’s ground.”¹⁷⁷

Approximately 1,300 men of the 1,400-strong revolutionary army lost their lives during the Battle of Medina and its immediate aftermath. The royalists, on the other hand, lost only fifty-five men. One contemporary newspaper described it as, “a conflict as bloody as any recorded in history.” Although this was superlative, the Battle of Medina is, by far, the bloodiest battle in Texas history, with fatalities outnumbering those of the Alamo and San Jacinto battles combined. Additionally, the Spanish victory at Medina crushed any hope for independence in the Eastern Internal Provinces for the next three years. Victory also meant that Arredondo became the predominant ruler of northeastern New Spain. He would use the powers of the

¹⁷⁶ Schwarz, *Forgotten Battlefield*, 104; Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas*, Vol. II, 30-31.

¹⁷⁷ Jiménez, “Loyalist Officer in New Spain,” 81; Schwarz, *Forgotten Battlefield*, 83, 86-88, 103; Arredondo, “Arredondo’s Report of Battle of Medina,” 225 (quotation).

office of commandant general to bring about positive change to the provinces under his charge, but he would also use his position to inflict a brutal reign of terror. After the Battle of Medina, the people of Texas would be a target of Arredondo's wrath.

What was Arredondo's role in achieving victory in the Battle of Medina? Was he, as some historians have claimed, simply in the right place at the right time? Or were his battlefield tactics imperative for a Spanish victory? Arredondo would certainly argue the latter and did so in his report to the viceroy. His biased account, however, devoted only twelve lines to the actual fighting thereby making an analysis of Arredondo's battle prowess difficult. Such an analysis may be unnecessary, as don Joaquín's main contribution to Spanish victory happened before fighting broke out. Toledo's Republican Army of the North entered the Battle of Medina divided between bickering factions, ill prepared for battle, dehydrated, and tired. Arredondo's men, on the other hand, were well trained, united, hydrated, physically fit, and in a defensive posture. The Spanish were in a better position to win because of Arredondo.¹⁷⁸

The men of the Spanish army also knew that Arredondo would punish them for cowardice and reward them for bravery. The commandant general stayed true to his word. In his account of the battle, he made sure to mention the brave contributions of the men under his command, and he recommended a number of officers for promotion, including future Texas governors Cristóbal Domínguez and Ignacio Pérez. Once again, Arredondo singled Santa Anna out for commendation, even recommending the lieutenant for promotion for exhibiting "great bravery."¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ Arredondo to the Viceroy May 27, 1820; Arredondo, "Arredondo's Report of Battle of Medina," 225; Bradley, "Forgotten Filibusters," 141.

¹⁷⁹ Arredondo, "Arredondo's Report of Battle of Medina," 229 (quotation).

CHAPTER 6

CALIGULA IN TEXAS, 1813-1814

Hello! Hello! to the Women. Hello! Hello! to the elderly. Run children and peasants far into the fields. There between the clouds of dust come the soldiers of Joaquín de Arredondo. This is the frontier of terror. When his legions pass, the earth trembles.

Poet Guillermo Prieto

The bloodshed of the Battle of Medina continued after the cannons fell silent. Offering no quarter, Arredondo ordered that any rebel survivors were to be “executed as just punishment for their crimes.” Covering their noses to ward off the stench of flesh decaying in the August sun, Spanish dragoons walked through rows of bodies and used lances and sabers to finish off any rebel who held on to life. Arredondo also dispatched Ignacio Elizondo and 200 cavalymen north towards San Antonio to execute those who had escaped the battlefield.¹⁸⁰

Elizondo’s mounted troops galloped the ten miles to San Antonio, stopping whenever they came upon fleeing insurgents. Many had fallen due to exhaustion. Others threw up their hands and begged for mercy. Elizondo’s men ignored these pleas, shot the insurgents, “cut them in quarters, and suspended them on poles and limbs of trees like beef or pork for the packer.” Some fifty Americans reached San Antonio and sought sanctuary among the town’s populace. Unfortunately for the men, word of the Spanish army’s victory had reached San Antonio, sending revolutionary sympathizers and anyone who may have helped the Americans fleeing on the Camino Real towards the United States. To appease the oncoming royalists,

¹⁸⁰ Randy Roberts and James Olsen, *A Line in the Sand: The Alamo in Blood and Memory* (New York: The Free Press, 2001), 64 (quotation); Schwarz, *Forgotten Battlefield*, 108.

remaining citizens imprisoned the fifty Americans and offered them to Elizondo when he arrived in San Antonio. These prisoners then met the same fate of their fallen comrades.¹⁸¹

While Elizondo pursued fleeing rebels, Arredondo had his infantry scour the battlefield for reusable items. They recovered seven rebel cannons, wagons of muskets and ammunition, medicine, and a number of the reported 950 cannonballs fired during the fight. Arredondo and his soldiers then camped at the Medina battlefield, caring for their wounded and burying their dead. They left the bodies of the revolutionaries to rot in the sun. Coyotes soon dragged arms and legs away from their owners to find a secure spot to devour the decaying flesh. Nine years after Battle of Medina, Colonel José Félix Trespalacios buried the skulls of the dead under an old oak tree and carved a huge cross into the tree's bark. Trespalacios was unable, however, to collect the rest of the remains. Because of this, a traveler passing by the Medina battlefield in 1828 remarked that pieces of revolutionaries, "abandoned to the wild beasts as heretics" were still, "to be found everywhere."¹⁸²

After a night of rest and recuperation, Arredondo had his men load their wounded and dying comrades into carts to be taken to San Antonio. When the army camped once again on August 19, Arredondo dispatched a letter to Viceroy Calleja. In the letter, Arredondo informed the viceroy of his victory in the Battle of Medina and postulated on the best course of action to take with the citizens of Texas. To don Joaquín, the people of Texas were traitors: many had openly supported the Republican Army of the North and the rest had done little to stop them. All had allowed the execution of unarmed Spanish officials. For these reasons, Arredondo

¹⁸¹ Chipman and Joseph, *Spanish Texas*, 251; Roberts and Olsen, *A Line in the Sand*, 64; Schwarz, *Forgotten Battlefield*, 108; Lamar, *The Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. VI, 123, 153 (quotation on page 123).

¹⁸² Schwarz, *Forgotten Battlefield*, 107, 148, 152 (quotation on page 148); Lamar, *Lamar Papers*, Vol. I, 285.

decided to take a harsh approach to Texas. Kill revolutionaries. Harm their families. With this mindset, Arredondo sent word to Elizondo to pursue rebel families fleeing eastward.

Meanwhile, he would deal with the people of San Antonio.¹⁸³

The following morning, don Joaquín entered San Antonio at the head of his triumphant army and ordered his soldiers to conduct a house-to-house search for revolutionary sympathizers. The inspection netted upwards of 700 Tejanos and 8 to 15 Anglos. Arredondo had some of this number locked in the local guardhouse, 300 others in the cells of local Catholic priests. This latter area was so compact that prisoners had almost no room to move and no hope of lying down. Lack of windows and the Texas summer heat increased the prisoners' suffering, and eighteen men died of suffocation the first night. The following morning, don Joaquín had his soldiers publicly execute forty of the remaining prisoners. Each day after this, three additional prisoners met this same fate. The executions usually consisted of soldiers lining prisoners against a wall to be shot. Oftentimes, Arredondo's men displayed their victim's bodies by, "dragging them round the public square, and then cutting off the arms and heads and placing them in public places." Arredondo had those not chosen for execution chained and put to work repairing San Antonio's streets.¹⁸⁴

Women captives listened to the haunting wails of their relatives from the confines of a hastily repurposed prison, which Spanish soldiers had ironically nicknamed "La Quinta," a term

¹⁸³ Schwarz, *Forgotten Battlefield*, 108, 109.

¹⁸⁴ Schwarz, *Forgotten Battlefield*, 108, 109 (quotation on page 109); *Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. IV, 339, 525-527, Vol. V, 10-11. The number of captives, as well as the number of men who died of suffocation, varies in different sources. For example, José Antonio Navarro estimated that 700 prisoners were taken and 25 men died of suffocation. Antonio Menchaca estimates the number at 600 imprisoned and 4 dead of suffocation. I deferred to Schwarz's numbers. It is unclear how the men determined who was and who was not pro-insurgency, but it seems that neighbors told on their neighbors. Some residents may have unfairly accused others to settle economic and personal matters.

used for country retreats in Spain. Although Arredondo would spare their lives, the women of La Quinta faced a daunting task: they had to grind twenty-four bushels of corn a day for tortillas to feed the occupying army. Grinding corn required that the women kneel on hands and knees and use curved stone *metates* to crush kernels into meal. Because their daily quota meant near constant labor, flesh eroded from palms and knees. Jail keepers lashed slow workers and those taking breaks. Perhaps even more unbearable than this torture, the women of La Quinta had to listen to the cries of their hungry children outside the prison begging for food. One such child was five-year-old José María Carvajal, whose mother Gertrúdis was among the confined. Carvajal, who would go on to become one of Mexico's leading liberal reformers, remembered the violence and hunger of these days for the rest of his life.¹⁸⁵

As if the constant, painful labor was not enough, the unfortunate women of La Quinta also “suffered the impure, lewd gazes and debasing remarks of officers and soldiers who enjoyed that detestable and repugnant spectacle.” Unfortunately for the women, it seems that this ill-treatment went beyond lustful looks and rude comments. When sisters, Juana Leal de Tarín and Concepción Leal de Garza—the former imprisoned for having a rebel as a husband, the latter for being outspoken—scorned the lurid remarks of their captors, Spanish soldiers raped the two women. Rape seems to have been a common occurrence at the makeshift prison, and it is possible that Arredondo condoned the practice. One potentially biased account claimed that at night, Arredondo would assign a woman from La Quinta to his officers so that “each one of those monsters would satiate his lasciviousness.” The men then returned women

¹⁸⁵ Teresa Polomo Acosta and Ruth Winegarten, *Las Tejanas: 300 Years of History* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 38; *Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. V, 11; Joséph E. Chance, *José María de Jesús Carvajal: The Life and Times of a Mexican Revolutionary* (San Antonio, Trinity University Press, 2006), 16.

to the prison each morning to grind corn. When the women tried to resist this cruel treatment by locking themselves arm-in-arm whenever nightfall came, the head jailer Acosta tied a female leader atop the Quinta and spent “one hour stripping her even of her under clothes and leaving her nakedness an object of public gaze.” The cruel Acosta, a man of African descent, further terrorized the women of the Quinta by periodically stripping naked and inviting his prisoners to make, “a comparison between himself and the whites.” There is no evidence that Arredondo personally raped and tortured the women of San Antonio, but he likely knew all that occurred. One source even claimed that when officers dined with the Commandant General and, “any of these cruel anecdotes would be cited, a pleasant smile would close the scene.”¹⁸⁶

With the population of San Antonio suffering Arredondo’s wrath, Elizondo and his cavalymen carried out the commandant general’s orders to capture revolutionaries and revolutionary-sympathizers fleeing toward the United States. Riding their horses as fast as the roughshod Camino Real would allow, the cavalry reached the Trinity River on September 3. There, they found that heavy rains had swollen the Trinity, trapping some 200-300 insurgent-sympathizers on the river’s western bank. After taking this group into custody, Elizondo sent a contingent of men to cross the river at a different location, but Indians allied with the rebels foiled the attempt by firing arrows at the cavalymen every time they tried to traverse the river. This forced the royalist to wait until the Trinity subsided on September 5 to cross. The delay allowed many revolutionaries—including rebel leader José Álvarez de Toledo and Samuel

¹⁸⁶ José Antonio Navarro, *Defending Mexican Valor in Texas: José Antonio Navarro’s Historical Writings, 1853-1857*, ed. David R. McDonald and Timothy M. Matovina (Austin: State House Press, 1995), 55 (first quotation); *Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. III, 525-527 (second, third, and fifth quotations on page 526); *Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. IV, 124 (fourth quotation); *Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. V, 11. The women were kept in the La Quinta prison for fifty-four days.

Kemper, as well as most of the people of Nacogdoches and the small villa of Trinidad— time to flee to the United States.¹⁸⁷

With East Texas clear of rebel activity and almost all non-Indian inhabitants, Elizondo dealt with the rebels he had captured on the Trinity. Perhaps hoping to avoid an international incident, Elizondo released American captives and even supplied the wounded with horses to aid their return to the United States. Tejano males were not so fortunate, as Elizondo ordered his soldiers to select a number of the men for execution. In a story that is probably apocryphal, some of the prisoners—knowing they faced execution—requested their last rites. The priest who was to perform the ceremony was Padre Camacho. Instead of administering the last rites, however, Camacho explained to the captives that a revolutionary had shot him during the Battle of Medina. He then said, “you may have been the one who shot me, and if so, may the Lord have mercy on you,” and executed each of the captives in turn. Although the facts of this particular tale are suspect, the Spanish army did execute seventy-one prisoners on the Trinity. Elizondo forced female captives to bathe nude in the Trinity while his men observed.¹⁸⁸

With the 200 or so remaining prisoners in tow, Elizondo turned west to report to Arredondo in San Antonio. He would not finish the trip. Sickened by the cruelties he had witnessed in the wake of the Battle of Medina, Spanish soldier Miguél Serrano grabbed a sword and confronted Elizondo in his tent. Cursing, Serrano stabbed one Spanish officer and cut a gaping gash into Elizondo’s torso. Although he survived the attack, Elizondo knew that he needed immediate medical attention. He wrote Arredondo requesting a medic and had his men

¹⁸⁷ *Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. IV, 123; *Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. V., 11-12; Schwarz, *Forgotten Battlefield*, 114-115.

¹⁸⁸ Schwarz, *Forgotten Battlefield*, 114-115; *Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. IV, 123 (quotation).

load him on a stretcher for the return trip to San Antonio. On September 12, before the cavalry reached their destination, Elizondo, the man that Mexican historians would later call “the traitor,” succumbed to his injuries and died. His soldiers buried him on the banks of the San Marcos River.¹⁸⁹

With Elizondo dead, Cayetano Quintero assumed command of the cavalry and marched the prisoners to San Antonio, arriving in the Texas capital a few days later. In a procession that one historian described as “reminiscent of Roman triumphs,” Quintero and his cavalry led the prisoners—exhausted and bedraggled from hundreds of miles of travel on foot—through columns of the Spanish army, which had lined up along San Antonio’s streets. The ghastly parade terminated in the central plaza, where don Joaquín, his officers, and around 1,000 spectators awaited. Once the captives reached this terminus, Arredondo broke out in song, serenading the defenseless prisoners with a tune he had learned from a rebel prisoner detailing the insurgents’ plan for the “one-eyed Arredondo” once they defeated him in battle. After the song’s final words flowed from the vengeful general’s mouth, he ordered his soldiers to execute every male prisoner. They did so, and then hung the bodies around the plaza where they would remain for months as a grizzly reminder of what faced those who would conspire against royal authority. Arredondo also had his soldiers decapitate two rebel spies and place their heads in iron cages atop poles in the plaza.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ *Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. V., 11-12; Schwarz, *Forgotten Battlefield*, 114-115; “Correspondence: Arredondo to Elizondo,” *Blake Supplement to the Béxar Archives*, 358-359.

¹⁹⁰ *Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. V., 11-12; Schwarz, *Forgotten Battlefield*, 115; *Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. IV, 123; Carlos E. Castañeda, *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas*, Vol., VI, 119; José Dario Zambrano to Benito de Armiñán, March 9, 1814, Texas, Bexar archives, in the archives of the University of Texas. Austin: University of Texas Archives University of North Texas Microform Collection, R53, F554-555 (hereafter cited as BA). The bodies remained in the plaza until at least March 9, 1814, when José Zambrano requested permission to bury them.

Arredondo taunted female captives with vulgar insults. Having heard that one woman had offered 500 pesos for his paunch in order to make it into a drum, Arredondo asked, "Whereabouts here is the woman who said she was going to eat my *huevos* roasted?" and opined, "They would do her more good raw!" Amazingly, Joséfa Arocha stepped forward and claimed credit for the insult. When don Joaquín asked if she had really planned to use his flesh for a drum, Arocha replied, "Yes. I have and would have made it, had I got it." Arredondo sarcastically replied, "You could not obtain my paunch, but now I can punish you as you deserve. You can go and rest at the Quinta, to make tortillas for my men and me." Although she countered with, "I would rather you would give me fifteen shots, than that it should come to this," Arredondo nonetheless sent Arocha and the rest of the woman to La Quinta where they would spend the next twenty days grinding corn and enduring the same lurid entreaties as the women that had been confined before.¹⁹¹

Arredondo continued to suppress rebel activity in Texas over the next six months. He sent spies to Louisiana, forced confessions out of surviving prisoners, and continued his merciless executions. On August 28, 1813, he ordered that citizens bring all revolutionary propaganda to royalist officials or face treason charges. Those who knew of someone with insurgent literature must report their neighbor or they too would be considered traitors. Harboring suspected revolutionaries and failure to report someone harboring revolutionaries were crimes punishable by death. In addition to these draconian measures, Arredondo issued an edict that required everyone in Texas, regardless of class, to wear a medal or ribbon as a sign

¹⁹¹ Schwarz, *Forgotten Battlefield*, 115; Antonio Menchaca, "Memoirs of Antonio Menchaca," (Accessed February, 2009) (quotations). Menchaca also said that Arocha offered 500 pesos for the head of her royalist husband, Pedro Treviño who had abandoned the revolutionary cause shortly before the Battle of Medina.

of loyalty to the king. In order to catch insurgents who had escaped the Battle of Medina, don Joaquín required anyone traveling outside San Antonio and La Bahía to carry a passport.¹⁹²

Cristóbal Domínguez, whom Arredondo had appointed Texas governor on August 24, 1813, placed further restrictions on the people of Texas. Domínguez forbade yelling, burning trash, and discharging firearms—lest these activities be construed as a revolutionary attack. He also prohibited the sale of liquor, banned public celebrations, and imposed a strict curfew—anyone out after dark had to have a permit. Unless accompanied by a male relative, women had to stay at home. Domínguez proved to be such an efficient governor that don Joaquín named him his second in command of the Eastern Internal Provinces on December 15, 1813.¹⁹³

Don Joaquín also had his soldiers confiscate the property of suspected insurgents. Anyone who had fled Texas, died in the Battle of Medina or its aftermath, or had suspicion of insurgent sympathies had their property seized. There were no charges. There were no trials. Indeed, when Arredondo released the women of La Quinta after fifty-four days, many found that they no longer had a family or a home. Ana María Arocha, for example, emerged from La Quinta to find that she had not only lost her husband and two sons to Arredondo's retribution, but Spanish soldiers had confiscated her home, as well as all her family's tools, jewelry, furniture, livestock, bedding, and farm equipment. In total, the Spanish army confiscated 62,642 pesos worth of assets in the two months after the Battle of Medina. Much of this

¹⁹² Benito de Armiñán to Joaquín de Arredondo, BA, R54, F203-204; David McDonald, *José Antonio Navarro: In Search of the American Dream in Nineteenth Century Texas* (Denton: Texas State Historical Association, 2010), 31, 34-35; Arredondo Proclamation, August 30, 1815, *Blake Supplement to the Bexár Archives*, Vol. X, 148-150; Joaquín de Arredondo to Benito de Armiñán, May 31, 1814, BA, R53, F937-966; Cristobal Dominguez Proclamation to Public, August 28, 1813, *Blake Supplement to the Bexas Archives*, Vol. X, 60.

¹⁹³ "Joaquín Arredondo to Christoval Dominguez, August 26, 1813, *Blake Supplement to the Béxar Archives*, Vol. X, 59; Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, 121-123; Joaquín de Arredondo to Christoval Dominguez, December 15, 1813, *Blake Supplement to the Bexar Archives*, Vol. X, 65.

property fell into the hands of those in Texas who had remained faithful to Spain. Arredondo had the rest sold at public auction, with the profits paying his soldiers' salaries and funding public works projects. Don Joaquín purchased a confiscated horse carriage at one such auction. Some family members of insurgents used creative measures to avoid having their property confiscated. Others, such as the distraught Ana María Arocha, successfully petitioned for restitution of lost goods.¹⁹⁴

Why did Arredondo employ such harsh measures following the Battle of Medina? Arredondo's only biographer, Judith Jiménez, believed Arredondo used customary methods of enforcing discipline and was, "no more cruel than the majority of the military men of his age." Jiménez's argument has some validity. Inflicting terror upon a population to encourage subservience was a common tactic of the Spanish military. In his excellent study of the era of Mexican independence, *The Other Rebellion*, Eric Van Young noted that occasionally, "scorched-earth policies [were] employed to control civilian populations and discourage active or passive support for the insurgents." This "Mexican Stalinism" was a common form of counterinsurgency and included dismembering and publicly displaying the bodies of captured revolutionaries, encouraging citizens to spy on their neighbors, and suppressing all literature unfriendly to the Spanish government. Arredondo, in effect, could have been following standard protocol.¹⁹⁵

Many of don Joaquín's contemporaries would disagree with Jiménez's assessment. Naturalist Jean Louis Berlandier, for example, opined that "ignorance—and, perhaps even more, prejudices instilled from childhood" motivated don Joaquín and his men to commit

¹⁹⁴ Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*, 245; Jack Jackson, *Los Mesteños: Spanish Ranching in Texas, 1721-1821* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1986), 540-541.

¹⁹⁵ Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 139 (first quotation); Van Young, *The Other Rebellion*, 347 (second and third quotations).

“actions which are not found except among nomadic tribes.” If his language is any indication, Arredondo certainly regarded the residents of San Antonio with disdain, calling them “vile rabble” and “traitors of God.” Such labels may have allowed Arredondo to put aside human decency. Perhaps, however, the commandant general was a despicable man who derived pleasure from the suffering of others. This seems to be what the residents of San Antonio thought, as one would later described Arredondo as a “Caligula.”¹⁹⁶

Whatever his motivation, don Joaquín had effectively rid Texas of revolutionary activity, prompting one San Antonio resident to proclaim, “a sepulchral silence reigned from that time, the patriotic flame became almost extinct.” In addition, Spanish officials seemed to think that the Battle of Medina would deter any future American filibustering into Texas. Arredondo shared this opinion and was so confident in his dominance of Texas that on October 14, 1813, the birthday of King Ferdinand VII, he freed many surviving male prisoners, as well as all female prisoners held in La Quinta. Don Joaquín also issued a general pardon to those who had fled Texas, allowing Tejanos Antonio Navarro, Erasmo Seguín, and many others to return home. Arredondo’s amnesty excluded insurgents whose “deeds had placed them beyond forgiveness,” a list that included Francisco de Arocha, Vicente Travieso, Juan Veramendi, and Francisco Ruíz. Arredondo not only exempted Samuel Davenport, Samuel Kemper, Gutiérrez de Lara, and Toledo from his pardon, but he also placed a hefty bounty on these men’s heads.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁶ Jean Louis Berlandier, *Journey to Mexico: During the Year 1824 to 1836* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1980), 284 (first quotation); Joaquín Arredondo to Christoval Dominguez, August 26, 1813, *Blake Supplement to the Bexar Archives*, Vol. X, 59; *Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. III, 526-527 (second quotation on page 526).

¹⁹⁷ *Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. III, 527 (first quotation); Garrett, *Green Flag over Texas*, 228; Jackson, *Los Mesteños*, 543 (second quotation); Jesús de la Teja, “Erasmo Seguin,” *The Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fse07> (accessed on November 2, 2010); Jesús F. de la Teja, “Rebellion on the Frontier,” in *Tejano Journey 1770-1850*, ed. Gerald Eugene Poyo (Austin: University of Texas

Although Arredondo's measures diminished rebel activity, they were devastating to living conditions in San Antonio. The death or exodus of skilled workers damaged the frontier province's fragile economy, and the some 1,800 soldiers of the Spanish army depleted San Antonio's already meager supply of livestock and corn. Perhaps most detrimental, hostile Indian attacks increased dramatically in the wake of the Battle of Medina, with the Lipan Apaches being the main perpetrators of raids. Much like the pampas Indians that Nicolás Arredondo had faced in the Río de la Plata, the Lipans were a semi-nomadic, mounted tribe who raided Spanish settlements and then escaped to the plains to avoid retribution. Unlike the Europeanized Indians Arredondo had faced in Tula and the Sierra Madre of Central Mexico, the Lipans maintained their own language and culture and lived largely outside the Spanish sphere of influence.¹⁹⁸

If Arredondo were to stop the Lipans, he would have to succeed where generations of Spaniards had failed. Apaches had refused to live in Spanish missions, spurned reservations, and often violated peace treaties with Spain whenever it made material sense to do so. In response, frustrated Spanish officials forged alliances with the Lipans' enemies, the Comanches, and tried to subdue the Apaches through force. At one point, the Spanish cut off the hands of Apache prisoners and deported them to Cuba, and Spain later launched a war of extermination on the Apaches. These measures proved costly, so the Spanish came up with a new plan: bribes. At the end of the eighteenth century, Spanish officials in Texas began offering tribute to Lipans in exchange for promises that they would not raid. Although this system proved effective for

Press, 1996), 28. For more on pardoning in the Mexican War for Independence, see Eric Van Young, *The Other Rebellion*, 118-125.

¹⁹⁸ Thomas A Britten, *The Lipan Apaches: People of Wind and Lightning* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 2009), xiii, 49.

decades, the outbreak of revolution redirected funds designated for the Lipans to fighting insurgents. With no tribute, the Lipans returned to raiding Spanish settlements. One hundred Lipans had even joined Gutiérrez de Lara's Republican Army of the North and fought in the Battle of Medina.¹⁹⁹

Arredondo had never dealt with Indians like the Lipan Apaches. As such, it seems that he based his strategy for ending Lipan raids on his father's knowledge of plains Indians, his own encounters with dissimilar Indians in the Sierra Gorda, and his brief experience with the Lipans in the Battle of Medina. Because the 100 Lipans in the Republican Army of the North had been among the first to flee the Battle of Medina, don Joaquín perceived the Apaches to be cowards who would bow to the slightest show of force. Therefore, Arredondo believed he could send small military expeditions to force the Apaches to submit to Spanish authority, a tactic that had worked among the Indians in the Sierra Gorda. His father had employed this strategy in the Río de la Plata in 1795 when an official in Paraguay expressed fear that Indians were planning an attack. Viceroy Nicolás de Arredondo responded to the threat by saying, "You do not have to be only on the defensive, but ready to set out on a sortie to annihilate them on the battlefield."²⁰⁰

Perhaps with his father's advice in mind, in December 1813 Arredondo sent Colonel Cayetano Quintero and 200 cavalymen to attack a 300-inhabitant Apache *ranchería* on the Guadalupe River. Quintero's men overran the Apache camp but only managed to kill one Indian, a blind man. Visiting the site of the fight over ten years later, naturalist Jean Louis Berlandier found the sun-bleached skull of this unfortunate Apache staring blankly across the

¹⁹⁹ F. Todd Smith, *From Dominance to Disappearance: The Indians of Texas and the Near Southwest, 1786-1859* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 41-46.

²⁰⁰ William Lovely to the Secretary of War, *The Territorial Papers of the United States: The Territory of Louisiana-Missouri, 1815-1821*, ed. Clarence Edwin Carter (Washington, D.C: United States Government Printing Office, 1951), 49-50; Weber, *Bárbaros*, 166 (quotation).

battlefield. In spite of the low body count, the sortie forced the Lipans to abandon their homes, and shortly thereafter, Lipan Chief El Cojo, came to San Antonio to ask for peace with the Spanish. Before Arredondo would approve of the armistice, he called on El Cojo to return stolen horses and meet with Antonio Cordero in Monclova. It is unclear if El Cojo met all of don Joaquín's demands, but he did return some stolen possessions and the Spanish and Apaches agreed to peace terms.²⁰¹

Arredondo soon learned that the tactics he had used in the Sierra Madre would not work in Texas. Within months, the Apaches broke the peace agreement when they discovered that Spain could do little to protect them from their Comanche enemies. Compounding the problem, the Comanches, who had maintained a rough peace with the Spanish for some thirty years also began raiding haciendas outside San Antonio in 1813. To deal with the attacks, on January 31, 1814, Arredondo ordered that ranches outside San Antonio were to be abandoned, their residents were to move to San Antonio, and their workers were to enlist in the local militia. In theory, this would swell the ranks of the city's military, thereby providing greater defense against Indian attacks. In practice, the plan proved to be a horrible mistake. With their inhabitants gone, Indians burned the abandoned ranches to the ground and killed untended livestock. Ranchers found their homes in ashes and their fields "turned putrid" from decaying animal flesh. With the livestock dead, San Antonio's residents suffered a severe meat shortage. Compounding the problem, the few ranchers who maintained livestock near San Antonio found it more profitable to take their animals to market in neighboring Coahuila and Louisiana. To halt

²⁰¹Britten, *Lipan Apaches*, 172; Jean Louis Berlandier, *The Indians of Texas in 1830*, John C. Ewers ed. (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1969), 131-133; Quintero to Arredondo, January 9, 1814, OG, R2; Arredondo, "Arredondo's account of the Battle of the Medina," 226 (quotation); Smith, *Dominance to Disappearance*, 103-108; Alamán, *Historia de Mexico*, Vol. II, 493; Joaquín de Arredondo to Benito de Armiñán, July 21, 1814, BA, R54, F32-33; Joaquín de Arredondo to Benito de Armiñán, July 28, 1814, BA, R54, F38-63.

this trade, Arredondo threatened to try anyone caught exporting cattle out of Texas as a traitor, with a guilty conviction meaning death. Although this measure seems to have been effective, the residents of San Antonio still lacked meat. Soon they turned to eating leather and other unpleasant things to fend off starvation.²⁰²

The second aspect of Arredondo's plan to combat Indians also failed. It centered on construction of a massive fort in the area of present-day San Marcos. Although soldiers had abandoned a presidio at San Marcos two years before due to Indian attacks, don Joaquín believed that a bigger, better-manned fort could provide a location from which soldiers could intercept Indians who had raided San Antonio. Cavalry could also patrol the region between the new fort and the presidio of La Bahía, thereby forming a defensive line in case of American invasion. Much like the forts that had protected his father in the Río de la Plata, Arredondo's presidio would have huge cannon-lined palisades reinforced by walls of earth. One hundred cavalymen and one hundred sixty infantry would staff the outpost. Don Joaquín authorized construction of the fort in August 1814, and construction of the new presidio began in December 1814. It stopped within a month, as Comanches attacked any worker venturing outside of camp for wood. When requests to Arredondo for supplies and a greater military presence went unanswered due to treasury shortages, workers abandoned construction of the fort in early 1815.²⁰³

²⁰² Jackson, *Los Mestizos*, 539, 544; Joaquín de Arredondo to Benito de Armiñán, January 31, 1814, BA, R53, F508-509; Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. VI, 121-122; Gary Clayton Anderson, *The Indian Southwest: Ethnogenesis and Reinvention, 1580-1830* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 253-254; Joaquín de Arredondo, February 2, 1814, BA, R53, F514.

²⁰³ Joaquín de Arredondo to Benito de Arimiñán, August 9, 1814, BA, R54, F108; Joaquín de Arredondo to Benito de Arimiñán, January 31, 1814, BA, R53, F508; Smith, *Dominance to Disappearance*, 106; Daniel P. Greene, "San Marcos," *The Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hes02> (accessed February 19, 2014); Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*, 216-220, 226; Arredondo to Benito de

Although Arredondo would continue to request funding for his fort, he soon concluded that contraband trade with the United States was ultimately responsible for Indian attacks and directed his attention to stopping this illicit activity. Under Spanish law, merchants had to conduct trade with Indians at authorized trading posts and could not provide Indians with firearms or alcohol. In addition, residents of Spanish colonies could not trade with foreign countries, except in authorized ports and trading posts. Because the closest port to Texas was Veracruz, a merchant would have to travel some 700 miles to legally trade with someone in neighboring Louisiana. This distance meant few manufactured goods reached Texas legally, and it led both Texas Indians and otherwise law abiding Tejanos to look to American contrabanders for desired items. Smugglers would cross into Texas from the United States to trade firearms, alcohol, and other sought after goods to Indians in exchange for cattle and horses stolen from San Antonio to sell in Louisiana. This then encouraged Indians to conduct even more raids on San Antonio for livestock to purchase contraband goods.²⁰⁴

Estimating that illegal goods from the United States were 400 percent cheaper than goods from within New Spain, don Joaquín attempted to create a viable trade network within Texas to end smuggling and Indian raiding. He authorized trade with Indians in La Bahía and

Arimiñán," September 10, 1814, BA, R54, F212; José Salinas to Benito de Armiñán, December 29, 1814, BA, R54, F553; José Salinas to Benito de Armiñán, December 31, 1814, BA, R54, F568; Benito de Armiñán to Francisco Arzmeñdi, February 3, 1815, BA, R54, F704. The last letter to originate from the sight of the fort is labeled December 31, 1814; Benito de Armiñán to Joaquín de Arredondo, April, 16, 1814, BA, R53, F715-739; Domingo de Ygartechea to Arredondo, May 8, 1816, AGNPI, R239. The term "fort" is used here instead of presidio because Arredondo himself referred to it as a "fuerte." It is usually translated as "guardhouse" in the English summary of the letters at the beginning of the Béxar archives microfilm. Arredondo's plan was reminiscent of the Marqués de Rubi's regulations of 1772 that called for a line of presidios with flying companies to protect the interior of New Spain.

²⁰⁴ Chipman and Joseph, *Spanish Texas*, 241-242; Raúl A. Ramos, *Beyond the Alamo: Forging Mexican Ethnicity in San Antonio, 1821-1861* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 55. Revolutionaries who had fled in the wake of the Battle of Medina, such as Francisco Ruiz, also participated in contraband trade with Americans and Indians.

planned an annual trade fair where Indians and merchants from Texas and nearby provinces could exchange goods. The crux of Arredondo's plan, however, rested on his belief that Texas "will be protected through other means, such as the opening of a port on the Gulf of Mexico, increasing the population. They will bring with them the arts and industry, commerce and prosperity, which is offered by that other vast and ferocious nation." In other words, don Joaquín felt that Spain could compete with the American traders if Texas had a port.

Accordingly, Arredondo authorized citizens of La Bahía to trade with other Spanish colonies free of duty for five years. Unfortunately, the closest harbor to La Bahía, Matagorda Bay, did not have a proper port, and Arredondo lacked the funds to build one. A shortage of money derailed a similar plan to open a port on the Rio Grande for trade between the Eastern Internal Provinces and either Havana or Campeche. As with his presidio, Arredondo would continue to request funds for a port, but for the foreseeable future, finances would not be forthcoming.²⁰⁵

Even without a port, Arredondo believed he could increase trade and grow the frontier province's economy by utilizing Texas's primary resource: land. If the people of Texas grew corn for consumption and tobacco for export, they could eventually turn a profit and, perhaps over time, even produce finished goods, such as cigars and leather goods. Don Joaquín's plan made sense in theory but, once again, failed to take into account the financial and political situation in Texas. Soon after the governor of Texas implemented the commandant general's plan, Indians began attacking farmers. To provide protection, then, Arredondo forced young men in San Antonio to enlist in the local militia, leaving fewer farmers to work the fields. This resulted

²⁰⁵ Enderle. "Contrabando y liberalismo," 58; Hatcher, *The Opening of Texas to Foreign Settlement of Texas*, 238, 246-247, 253-254; Ramos, *Beyond the Alamo*, 48-49 (quotation on page 49). The annual trade fair does not appear to have ever taken place. The above quotation comes from later in Arredondo's tenure, but his feelings about opening a port in Texas remained consistent.

in a smaller harvest and less food to feed militiamen and their horses. This malnourished militia was unable to fight effectively, allowing Indians to continue preying on farmers and further deplete the harvest. One Texas governor said of Arredondo's decision to increase the size of San Antonio's militia, "this measure is going to cause the ultimate ruin of this province." Although this assertion is exaggerated, from 1813 to 1817, fifty residents of San Antonio lost their lives to Indian attacks, more than had been lost in the two decades prior to Arredondo's arrival.²⁰⁶

A rapid turnover in the governor's office was at least partially to blame for the failure of don Joaquín's various efforts to improve conditions in Texas. Arredondo's initial appointee, Governor Domínguez, died in October 1814. Benito Armiñán served as interim governor after Domínguez's death, but illness, too, limited his term. Arredondo relieved the weakened official of his duties on July 19, 1815, and appointed Mariano Varela as his replacement. Varela served one undistinguished year before he also fell ill and requested to be relieved of his duties. Arredondo replaced him with Ignacio Pérez, a Texas resident who had fought with the royalists during the Battle of Medina. Manuel Pardo relieved Pérez, but soon thereafter, he left to take

²⁰⁶ Ramos, *Beyond the Alamo*, 49 (quotation); Joaquín de Arredondo to Benito de Armiñán, September 7, 1814, BA, R54, F208-209; Hatcher, *Opening of Texas to Foreign Settlement*, 246-247, 253-254, 258; "Arredondo Proclamation" sold in Heritage Texana auction #6003 http://books.google.com/books?id=4EUOSo5BMoIC&pg=PA8&dq=Joaquin+arredondo&hl=en&ei=kqzdTLrPFMH88AbomanaDw&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=5&ved=0CDgQ6AEwBDgy#v=onepage&q=Joaquin%20arredondo&f=false (accessed on November 10, 2010); Antonio Martínez, *Letters from Gov. Antonio Martinez to the Viceroy Juan Ruiz de Apodaca* (San Antonio: Research Center for the Arts and Humanities, University of Texas at San Antonio, 1983), 21; Anderson, *Indian Southwest*, 255. Further complicating matters, a volcanic explosion in Indonesia in 1815 caused a worldwide drought in 1816, which likely led to massive crop failures in northeastern Mexico, see Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 30-31. To properly grow tobacco and corn, the people of Texas also needed farming tools, which the Spanish treasury was unable to provide.

the governorship of nearby Coahuila. Finally, Antonio Martínez took over the governor's office in May 1817 and would remain governor for the next five years.²⁰⁷

In spite of his many failures and instability in the governor's office, Arredondo brought some positive change to Texas. He approved a measure to establish a primary school in San Antonio, suggested selling communal lands to pay for the school's supplies, and authorized the use of a building confiscated from a rebel as a schoolhouse. The public school opened in fall 1815, and a second school held class in La Bahía by 1818. Don Joaquín also used funds from selling confiscated goods at auction to pay for repairs to the Mission Valero and for lighting for San Antonio's plaza. In addition, Arredondo repealed a 10 percent tax on rent until Texas returned to its former state, sent sorely needed medicine to San Antonio's hospital, asked the other Eastern Internal Provinces to donate food to the inhabitants of Texas, and endorsed a plan to provide welfare to families of soldiers killed while fighting Indians.²⁰⁸

There is little available information concerning Arredondo's personal life during the seven months he spent in Texas. He slept and worked out of the governor's house. The building had a huge hole above the bedroom that required the commandant general to stretch a tent above his bed whenever it rained. In spite of these deplorable conditions, don Joaquín hosted dinners for his officers and prominent royalist Tejanos. Although his wife would not join him,

²⁰⁷ Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. VI, 127, 145.

²⁰⁸ Joaquín de Arredondo to Maríano Varela, July 30, 1815, BA, R55, F450-458; Joaquín de Arredondo to Benito de Armiñán, July 10, 1815, BA, R55, F371-373; Joaquín de Arredondo to Governor of Texas, September 28, 1815, BA, R55, F736-737; Joaquín de Arredondo to Governor of Texas, July 9, 1814, BA, R54, F600; Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas*, Vol. VI, 122; Ayuntamiento to Antonio Martínez, May 31, 1814, BA, R53, F969; Joaquín de Arredondo to Benito de Armiñán, January 3, 1815, BA, R54, F600-606; Frederick Eby, *Education in Texas Source Materials, University of Texas Bulletin* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1918), 4-7, 23-27.

don Joaquín was not without female companionship in Texas, with one source saying the commandant general enjoyed the company of a beautiful mistress named Pia Quinta.²⁰⁹

Arredondo also became better acquainted with junior officer Antonio López de Santa Anna while in Texas. Santa Anna had served under don Joaquín since leaving Veracruz in 1811 and had earned his senior officer's praise for courage and devotion to duty. This assessment would change due to Santa Anna's gambling. One day during the Spanish army's occupation of San Antonio, Santa Anna found himself penniless due to gambling losses. Like many gamblers, Santa Anna believed his luck would change, so he forged Arredondo's name on a requisition for 500 pesos. Although Santa Anna planned to return the money after he had won it back gambling, unfortunately, the "money was gone in a few moments." When Arredondo discovered the theft, he grew furious, and ordered his soldiers to arrest Santa Anna and take him to Monterrey as a prisoner. Before the sentence could be carried out, however, Santa Anna used the charms that would later carry him into the presidency of Mexico to convince a group of women to beg don Joaquín for clemency. Displaying an affinity for females that were not his wife, Arredondo's temper subsided, and he ordered Santa Anna released.²¹⁰

Instead of taking the narrow escape as a sign to change his ways, Santa Anna ignored Arredondo's leniency and forged Cayetano Quintero's signature on a check for 6,000 pesos. Again, he was caught and locked in prison. This time Cayetano Quintero stepped in on Santa Anna's behalf and convinced the commandant general that because he, the victim, felt no ill

²⁰⁹ *Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. 6, 338; Martínez, *Letters from Gov. Antonio Martínez to the Viceroy*, 10.

²¹⁰ *Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. 6, 195, 218, 338 (quotation on page 195); Testimony of Jaime Garza, *Documentos Relativos a Santa Anna*, BLAC. See also, Callcott, *Santa Anna*, 12. Sources differ on the amount of money Santa Anna swindled and it appears that the surgeon for the Battalion of Veracruz fronted some money to pay off Santa Anna's debt. Garza and Menchaca's accounts differ slightly in other ways.

will, Santa Anna should not face imprisonment. Although Arredondo agreed with his friend, he still wanted to punish Santa Anna, so he sent the young officer to recruit men into the military from small towns in Nuevo León. Don Joaquín meant this to be an unpleasant and difficult duty—few people wanted to give up farming for the hazardous life of a soldier. Santa Anna, however, found a way to profit from his new station. He approached men in these villages with a proposition: if they paid him a small fee, he would give them a service exemption. Those who did not pay would be impressed into military service. Most opted for the payment. Again, Arredondo learned of Santa Anna’s actions, but this time he had his subordinate sent to the Castle of San Juan de Ulúa in Veracruz to stand trial for forgery and theft. Although it seems that the commandant general had finally punished his junior officer, perhaps Santa Anna had the last laugh, as one Spanish soldier would later report that while in Texas, Santa Anna “was accustomed to stay with the mistress of Arredondo.”²¹¹

After seven months in Texas, on March 12, 1814, Arredondo left San Antonio for Nuevo León where he would serve as commandant general. As he departed, he declared that he had brought complete tranquility to Texas by “punishing the hostile barbarian nations, destroying the factions, and imposing respect for the Spanish government.” Although all of these claims are true, Arredondo and his men had also depopulated Texas and destroyed all Spanish settlements in East Texas, leaving the region open to settlement by revolutionaries, Americans, pirates, deserters, refugees, escaped slaves, and others with no reason to submit to Spanish authority. Don Joaquín had also implemented ineffective measures to subdue Texas’s Indian

²¹¹ *Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. 6, 195, 218-219, 338 (quotation on page 338); Testimony of Jaime Garza, *Documentos Relativos a Santa Anna*, BLAC; Callcott, *Santa Anna*, 12. The results of the trial are unknown—supposedly, Santa Anna later had all records pertaining to the case destroyed—and some of the details of the Santa Anna’s falling out with Arredondo may be inaccurate. It is known that by 1815, Santa Anna was in Veracruz.

tribes, crippled Spain's tenuous hold on the region, and left residents destitute and in shock.

One amateur historian described the people of Texas as victims of post-traumatic stress disorder. Although Arredondo would never again set foot on Texas soil after 1814, his actions in the region in 1813 and 1814 and his policies as commandant general would continue to influence Texas well into the future.²¹²

²¹² Proclamation of Joaquín de Arredondo, July 9, 1814, BA, R54, F572-576 (quotation); *Papers of Mirabeau Lamar*, Vol. III, 527. For more on the troubles facing Texas in the last years of Spanish rule, see Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. VI, 121-176. Dan Arellano used the term "post traumatic stress disorder" to describe the condition of San Antonio's inhabitants at his annual memorial for the Battle of Medina on August 21, 2010. For a look at the population change in Texas, see Tina Laurel Meacham, "The Population of Spanish and Mexican Texas, 1716-1836." (Ph.D. diss. University of Texas, Austin, 2000).

CHAPTER 7

THE VICEROY OF THE NORTH, 1814-1815

The commandant, because of his education and character, naturally wishes to work according to the laws he knows; and, accustomed to being obeyed, he, sometimes without even thinking of it, demands of the peaceful laborer, the quiet shepherd, the industrious artisan, etc., the same blind obedience and the same performance without reply that he has been accustomed to demand of his soldiers. Thus he ultimately develops into a despot and causes the most serious injuries to the people, who would be free of all this if they had a political government that conformed more closely to civil and social laws.

Miguel Ramos Arizpe

*Death to the constitution and the liberals! Viva King Ferdinand!
Viva Arredondo!*

Monterrey Crowd

There are two viceroys, Calleja and Arredondo.

Carlos María de Bustamante

Don Joaquín had a number of decisions to make as he led his army out of Texas in March 1814. With the insurgency in decline, he was now able to concentrate on his duties as commandant general, which don Joaquín understood to mean that he was the supreme authority over 161,000 people in a region covering thousands of square miles. How would he maintain control over such an expansive territory and such a diverse population? Where would he have his capital? Who would serve in his administration? Who would be his governors? How could he prevent future rebellions?²¹³

One of Arredondo's biggest decisions concerned his 1,800-man army. With the revolution in Texas defeated, it seems that don Joaquín allowed his militiamen—including

²¹³ McEnroe, *From Colony to Nationhood*, 201; Proclamation of Joaquín de Arredondo, June 9, 1814, BA, R54, F572-576.

Cayetano Quintero—to return home. Although no insurgent armies remained in the field in northeastern New Spain, don Joaquín still needed soldiers to keep roads clear of bandits in Coahuila, stop Indian raids in Texas, prevent rebellion in Nuevo León, watch for invasions in Nuevo Santander, and otherwise maintain the peace in the geographically diverse and expansive eastern provinces. To do these things, don Joaquín divided the Infantry Regiment of Extremadura and deployed the men to frontier presidios and strategic outposts throughout northeastern New Spain. For example, he sent Francisco López and 156 Extremadura soldiers to guard ports in Nuevo Santander. Benito Armiñán and an Extremadura battalion remained in San Antonio, but don Joaquín would later dispatch them to Monclova in 1815. Some 100 men from the Extremadura Regiment remained with Arredondo, as did the 200-or-so soldiers of the Veracruz Battalion.²¹⁴

Don Joaquín and these soldiers arrived in Laredo on April 5 and remained there for three months while Arredondo made administrative decisions. Perhaps of greatest import, the new commandant general needed to determine what town would serve as his capital. The last commandant general had governed from Chihuahua City, but following the division of the Internal Provinces, this city became a part of the western provinces. Of the suitable towns in the eastern provinces, Monterrey, Nuevo León, and Coahuila, Saltillo, were the best candidates. Saltillo was the economic nucleus of northeastern New Spain. It housed the region's treasury, and it hosted an annual fair that brought in significant wealth. Saltillo was also close to

²¹⁴ Mariano Varela to Arredondo, August 3, 1815, BA, R55, F485-486; Arredondo to Viceroy, May 27, 1814, AGNPI R260; Estado que manifiesta la fuerza efectiva del Regimiento Infanteria de Extremadura, July 1814, AGNPI, R240; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 350. Bustamante mentions that Arredondo dispatched some of the Extremadura Regiment to Lobera, but does not say which Lobera. Keeping track of the various militia and armies in the eastern province is difficult, as Arredondo constantly redeployed his soldiers to meet the various threats facing the provinces.

Monclova, another large city. Monterrey would also make a good capital. It was home to northeastern New Spain's diocese, and it had served as a capital of the eastern provinces in the eighteenth century. Monterrey was also more centrally located than Saltillo, meaning Arredondo could better respond to insurgent threats or invasion from the United States. It was this last point that convinced don Joaquín to choose Monterrey as his capital.²¹⁵

While in Laredo, don Joaquín dispatched letters to various civil and military authorities. He asked the governors of the four eastern provinces to provide information on their provinces' population, economic situation, and problems. He ordered militia and presidio commanders to send muster rolls, weapon inventories, and fiscal information. On April 12, Arredondo wrote Viceroy Calleja with his own report. He recounted his experiences in Texas and informed Calleja that encroachment from the United States, attacks from hostile Indians, and lack of proper funding threatened Spain's control of the eastern provinces. Don Joaquín suggested a military reorganization of the provinces to better deal with these problems.²¹⁶

On July 1, Arredondo and his men departed Laredo heading south across the cactus, mesquite, and chaparral-covered Rio Grande plains toward Monterrey. In the eighteen-day trip through Nuevo León, the Spanish army would have witnessed the Sierra Madre Oriental rising in the distance. Although many of Nuevo León's 70,000 citizens mined the mineral rich Sierra Madres for their livelihood, most residents of the province were ranchers and farmers. As such, the army likely passed settlements filled with goats, cows, and fields of corn, beans, oranges, lemons, vegetables, and sugarcane. Venturing further south, the Spanish army would have seen

²¹⁵ Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 350; Benavides, "Loss by Division," 206. For an overview of Saltillo and Monterrey in the early years of the independence movement, see Canales, *En los albores de la independencia*.

²¹⁶ Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 350; Benavides, "Loss by Division," 206; Arredondo to Viceroy, May 27, 1814, AGNPI, R260.

Arredondo's new capital, Monterrey nestled in the Extremadura Valley at the foot of the Sierra Madre Oriental. Established in 1596, Monterrey's fertile soil, proximity to mineral-rich mountains, and abundance of water from the Ojo de Agua de Santa Lucia and the Santa Lucia River made the city an important stopover on the Camino Real. By 1814, Monterrey was the largest city in Nuevo León.²¹⁷

When Arredondo and his soldiers reached the outskirts of Monterrey on July 18, 1814, they found a delegation of church officials awaiting them. After greeting the new commandant general, the delegation escorted the Spanish army past citrus groves, across the Santa Lucia River, and through slums of *jacales* to reach the myriad of stone buildings at the center of Monterrey. Among these structures were a seminary, a royal hospital, and a Franciscan convent. A complex known as the Obispado overlooked the city from a rocky outcropping. Although these buildings were impressive in size, the delegation's destination, the Nuestra Señora Cathedral, dwarfed them all. Erected in 1777, the cathedral served as the diocese of the eastern provinces and was, perhaps, the most impressive piece of architecture in the eastern provinces. Increasing the ambiance, the local cathedral chapter had lined up along the Monterrey's streets in ceremonial formation to greet the new commandant general and his army. When Arredondo reached the building, two chaplains assisted him in dismounting his horse and escorted the commandant general through the cathedral's colossal wood doors.²¹⁸

²¹⁷ Arizpe, *Arizpe's Report*, 3, 4, 12-13, 20, 22; Samuel N. Dicken, "Monterrey and Northeastern Mexico," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 29 (June 1939): 133-134; Jones, *Los Paisanos*, 33, 35-36; Davis, "Monterrey Translation," 176-177, 179-180. See also, Samuel N. Dicken, "The Basin Settlements of the Middle Sierra Madre Oriental, Mexico," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 26 (September 1936): 157-178. For a summary of the insurgency in Monterrey and Saltillo see, Canales, *En los albores de la independencia*, 259-260.

²¹⁸ Arizpe, *Arizpe's Report*, 13; Jones, *Los Paisanos*, 35-36; Samuel Bangs, "Mr. Bang's Narrative," *North Star*, February 3, 1824; Andrés de Ymaz y Altolaguerre, José Bernardino Cantú, and Juan Francisco de Arce Rosales

Once inside Nuestra Señora, the chaplains blessed don Joaquín with holy water, draped him in fine vestments, and guided him to a seat at the front of the cathedral. The regional bishop then entered into a solemn church ceremony meant to honor incoming commandant generals and foster cooperation between church and state. As the bishop was carrying out the proceedings, don Joaquín interrupted and demanded, “the recitation of the creed and the prayers of confession by two chaplains who should stand on either side of him, the presentation of the missal by the dean, and the praise of the deacon at the moment that the oblate was raised.” Arredondo insisted on this specific ceremony because it would grant him *real patronato* status: the power to appoint vacated ecclesiastical offices. In the past, the *real patronato* had been the exclusive dominion of the Spanish king, but by the nineteenth century, other royally appointed authorities had assumed the power. As commandant general, Arredondo believed himself to be one such official, and, as such, felt justified in interrupting the bishop’s recitation. As Monterrey’s clergy understood it, commandant generals did not have *real patronato* status, and so the bishop denied don Joaquín’s request and chided him for his disruption. The surly general responded by accusing the bishop of Monterrey of sympathizing with the insurgency. The bickering continued until don Joaquín stormed out of the cathedral.²¹⁹

The affair in the cathedral established a bitter rivalry between the commandant general and the local church that would last for years. Soon after leaving the cathedral, the Nuestra

to Calleja, August 20, 1814, AGNPI, R239; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 350-351; Benavides, “Loss by Division,” 207.

²¹⁹ Andrés de Ymaz y Altolaquierre, José Bernardino Cantú and Juan Francisco de Arce Rosales to Calleja, August 20, 1814; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 350-351; Benavides, “Loss by Division,” 207; Davis, “Monterrey Translation,” 181 (quotation); J. Lloyd Mecham, “The Origins of ‘Real Patronato de Indias’” *The Catholic Historical Review* 14 (July 1928): 205-206. For an excellent overview of the use of ritual and ceremony in power struggles between clergy and secular leaders, see Ramos, *Identity, Ritual, and Power in Colonial Puebla*, 176-178, 180.

Señora clergy dispatched a series of letters to Viceroy Calleja complaining about don Joaquín's actions and asking for the viceroy's judgment concerning the commandant general's *real patronato* status. Arredondo sent his own series of letters to Calleja. Although the viceroy sided with the clergy concerning the *real patronato*, don Joaquín refused to accept the ruling. He would continue to believe that he held the *real patronato* status until the king of Spain returned to the throne and told him otherwise.²²⁰

After leaving the cathedral following the confrontation with Monterrey's clergy, Arredondo turned his attention to administrative matters. He dispatched his soldiers to Monterrey's military hospital, which would serve as their barracks for the next year, and prepared the local governor's office to be his home and headquarters for his tenure as commandant general. Located one block east of the Nuestra Señora Cathedral, the governor's office was an eighteenth century building nicknamed "casa grande" for its large size. Because the last governor of Nuevo León had died while in office in 1813, it seems the casa grande had been vacant for almost a year and was devoid of furniture. To make the building into a functional living and work environment, then, don Joaquín allocated funds for a desk, tables, chairs, ink, paper, and other office equipment.²²¹

With his new home and office established, Arredondo faced a daunting task: creating a bureaucracy where none had existed before. When the eastern and western provinces divided, the commandant general of the western provinces inherited most of the political infrastructure,

²²⁰Andrés de Ymaz y Altolaguerre, José Bernardino Cantú and Juan Francisco de Arce Rosales to Calleja, August 20, 1814; Benavides, "Loss by Division," 207; McEnroe, "Spain's Tlaxcalan Vassals," 263. Arredondo held on to his claim until the king himself denied commandant generals *real patronato* status on September 10, 1817.

²²¹ Benavides, "Loss by Division," 206-209. It is possible that someone lived in the casa grande in the interim between the previous governor and Arredondo. It is also possible that the building contained proper work equipment, but Arredondo ordered new furniture and supplies for other reasons.

leaving don Joaquín the responsibility of appointing all new positions in the government of the eastern provinces. Spanish law required that commandant generals employ a military legal council, a secretary, a first official, a second official, an archivist, and a copyist. Don Joaquín turned primarily to the men in his army to fill these offices. He named military officer Rafael de Llano his military legal counsel. Although he left the position of second official unfilled, a trusted officer probably performed the duties of the office. Military officers also filled the job of archivist and copyist. Pedro Simón del Campo was one of the few officials that Arredondo had not culled from his army. Instead, Arredondo chose Del Campo to be first official and secretary because he had served under the previous commandant general and was familiar with the duties of the office. As first official and secretary, Del Campo was responsible for maintaining the archives of the Eastern Internal Provinces and for transcribing Arredondo's orders to paper.²²²

Although the viceroy traditionally appointed the governors of the four eastern provinces, Arredondo believed this duty rested with commandant generals during times of war, and, as such, went about filling the offices with trusted men. Trusting no one more than himself, Arredondo took personal control of two governorships. He remained Nuevo Santander's governor, although he delegated the administrative duties of the province to junior officers. He also took unofficial command of Nuevo León. When the governor of Nuevo León, José Ramón Díaz de Bustamante y Berroterán—one of the men with whom Arredondo had feuded over Texas in 1813—died in office, Monterrey's ayuntamiento acted as governor. Although the body would officially maintain this capacity for the next two years, Arredondo

²²² Benavides, "Loss by Division," 206-209.

gradually usurped their power. Don Joaquín left Antonio Cordero y Bustamante—a devout royalist that had served in this position for well over ten years—as governor of Coahuila. As of July 1814, Arredondo’s former major general Cristóbal Domínguez was still in charge of Texas.²²³

A group of seven elected officials known as the provincial deputation was not pleased with Arredondo or his administrative changes. The idea of a provincial deputation was new. While Arredondo was busy in the Valle del Maíz in 1812, the Cortés of Cadíz—the liberal junta that had assumed power in Spain following Ferdinand’s abdication—had drafted the Constitution of 1812 based on Enlightenment principles. In addition to instituting a new tax system, establishing certain property rights, permitting freedom of the press, and making all citizens equal under the law, the Constitution of 1812 created a constitutional monarchy. According to the Cortés of Cadíz and the Constitution of 1812, once Ferdinand returned from exile in France, he would have to accept reduced authority and be beholden to a popularly elected parliament.²²⁴

Additionally, the Constitution of 1812 included a system wherein locally elected officials would form a provincial deputation and assume administrative duties for intendancies in Spanish America. As the Eastern Internal Provinces was one such intendancy, on February 20, 1814, locals elected seven officials to make up the provincial deputation. As outlined in the constitution, the provincial deputation was to assess public funds, promote education and public works, take a census, oversee charitable institutions and Indian missions, and report

²²³ Nettie Lee Benson, *The Provincial Deputation in Mexico: Harbinger of Provincial Autonomy, Independence, and Federalism* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992), 13.

²²⁴ For an overview of the Constitution of 1812 and its effect on New Spain, see Nettie Lee Benson, “The Contested Mexican Election of 1812,” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 26 (August 1946): 336-350.

abuses of power by Spanish officials. An amendment made the provincial deputation responsible for taxing citizens and recruiting soldiers—duties that had previously rested with the commandant general. Indeed, the Constitution of 1812 did not clearly define the powers of commandant generals, but did stipulate that they were to serve as executive officers for their local provincial deputations and that they must be present at the deputation's first meeting.²²⁵

This latter stipulation would prove to be an item of consternation, as the eastern province's deputation held its first meeting in Monterrey on March 21, 1814, just as Arredondo was leaving Texas for Laredo. Citing the constitution's attendance requirement, the members of the provincial deputation refused to recognize don Joaquín as commandant general and took it upon themselves to promote don Antonio Múgica head political chief. The provincial deputation then sent a letter to don Joaquín in Laredo informing him of what they had done. Perhaps revealing that the decision had been more about a personal distaste for Arredondo than bureaucratic oversight, the letter also included a long list of grievances against the absent general. In letters to both Viceroy Calleja and don Joaquín, the provincial deputation complained of compulsory loans that Arredondo had imposed prior to his invasion of Texas, mistreatment of citizens by soldiers, and forced conscriptions into the Spanish army.²²⁶

Arredondo received the deputation's complaints while in Laredo and grew angry. Like many devout royalists, he disliked the Constitution of 1812, regarding the document and its constitutional monarchy as the same liberal drivel that had given birth to the French Revolution and Hidalgo's revolt. Circumstance had forced Arredondo and other royalists to respect the

²²⁵ Benson, *Provincial Deputation*, 5-7, 13-14. Benson had the body first meeting on June 10, 1814, others May 16, and still others March 21.

²²⁶ Proclamation of Joaquín de Arredondo, June 9, 1814, BA, R54, F572-576; Benson, *Provincial Deputation*, 13-14. Although the deputation had legitimate complaints against Arredondo, they also feared losing their traditional privileges and powers. See, McEnroe, *From Colony to Nationhood*, 186.

Cortés, but they expected the king to do away with the constitution's liberal reforms when he returned from exile. Accordingly, don Joaquín disliked the body because it was a product of the constitution as well as a rival to his power. He also personally distrusted members of the deputation, having heard that many supported independence from Spain. Don Joaquín expressed his disdain in his reply to the provincial deputation on June 17. In addition to accusing the body of disrespecting his authority and interfering in matters that were not its concern, Arredondo claimed that the deputation had no legitimacy. Therefore, their complaints were invalid. In addition to sending his response to Monterrey, don Joaquín asked Viceroy Calleja for permission to disband or disregard the deputation. Although Calleja sympathized with Arredondo, he was restrained by the constitution and told his friend he could do nothing.²²⁷

Don Joaquín decided to take matters into his own hands when he arrived in Monterrey. Less than a week after he had stormed out of the Nuestra Señora Cathedral, Arredondo ordered his soldiers to seize the provincial deputation's archives. Although sources differ, it seems that the soldiers arrived at a provincial deputation meeting at ten in the morning, informed the members that don Joaquín had assumed authority, and demanded the deputation's minutes, debate books, drafts, and files. Although the deputation turned over the requested materials, they continued to meet without Arredondo's approval for the next month. During these meetings, they sent letters complaining about the commandant general's actions to Mexico City, hoping to have Arredondo censured or replaced. On August 18, 1814, they

²²⁷ Valerio-Jiménez, "Neglected Citizens and Willing Traders," 269-270; Lillian Estelle Fisher, *The Background of the Revolution for Mexican Independence* (New York, Russell & Russell, 1971), 334-335; Benson, *Provincial Deputation*, 13-14.

received news that dashed these hopes. That day, word arrived that Arredondo would no longer have to bother with the provincial deputation. King Ferdinand VII had returned from exile and just as the royalists had hoped he had abrogated the Constitution of 1812.²²⁸

Once again, the Napoleonic Wars in Europe were affecting politics in the Americas. In 1812, a failed invasion of Russia hurt Napoleon's planned domination of Europe and led a coalition of British and Portuguese troops to go on the offensive in Spain. In March 1813, French forces fell to the British-Portuguese coalition, forcing Joséph Bonaparte to end his six-year reign on the Spanish throne to retreat to France. In the hopes that Ferdinand would return to Spain and maintain peace with France, Napoleon released the deposed Spanish king. Before Ferdinand could return from exile, however, Russia invaded France from the east, while a British coalition entered France from the south and west. The anti-Napoleonic Coalition then took Paris on March 30, 1814. Defeated, at least for the time being, Napoleon abdicated and accepted exile on the Mediterranean island of Elba.²²⁹

When Ferdinand returned to Spain shortly thereafter, the Cortés asked him to endorse the Constitution of 1812 and accept his new, limited role as a constitutional monarch. Although Ferdinand offered tentative support to constitution, he changed his mind upon returning to Madrid and reassuming the throne. On May 4, 1814, he signed a decree that both nullified the constitution and declared the Cortés to be an illegal body. He arrested liberal leaders, had his men confiscate and destroy copies of the constitution, and ordered the dissolution of provincial deputations and local *ayuntamientos* that had formed under the constitution. Reports of

²²⁸ Benson, *Provincial Deputation*, 13-14; Juan Arizpe to Viceroy, August 3, 1814, AGNPI, R104.

²²⁹ Carr, *Spain: A History*, 199-200. For the most comprehensive account of Napoleon's conflict with Spain, see Oman, *A History of the Peninsular War*.

Ferdinand's return and his dismissal of the Constitution of 1812 reached Arredondo on August 18, 1814, exactly one year after his victory at the Battle of Medina. Don Joaquín reveled in the news and lost little time dismissing the Cortés-imposed provincial deputation. He then allocated funds for a celebration honoring Ferdinand's homecoming.²³⁰

The celebration began at 8:00 at night of August 31, 1814 with musicians marching through Monterrey's streets playing music to honor Ferdinand's return to power. The parade's final destination was the home of don Isidro Campos, where the musicians serenaded royalists and members of the Spanish military gathered for a fiesta. At first, the night proceeded without incident. The royalists drank, danced, and reveled in the glorious news of Ferdinand's return. Around midnight, however, things took a dark turn when Arredondo's heavily intoxicated aide-de-camp Captain José Antonio Fernández called twenty-five soldiers to muster outside don Isidro's house. Carrying a portrait of Ferdinand VII, Fernández conducted a drunken inspection of his men before handing out ammunition. Sensing trouble, the musicians attempted to slink away but soldiers apprehended them, held them at gunpoint, and forced them to play music and march toward the cathedral square. The soldiers followed behind and recruited onlookers into their drunken entourage. Arriving in the plaza shortly thereafter, the soldiers halted, raised their weapons, and started firing at a statue of Minerva, the Roman Goddess of Wisdom.²³¹

²³⁰ Carr, *Spain: A History*, 199-200; McEnroe, *From Colony to Nationhood*, 187; Benson, *Provincial Deputation*, 14; Benavides, "Loss by Division," 207. Benson and Benavides disagree on the day of the deputation's final meeting.

²³¹ Eduardo Enrique Ríos, "Fusilamiento de la Diosa Minerva," *Prensa*, Jan 17, 1937. Ríos was a contemporary of Alessio Robles who wrote this article for the *Periódicos Lozano* as a supplement to Robles's *Monterrey en la Historia y en la Leyenda*. As will be explained later, there was a very detailed investigation of the events of this night, wherein a number of witnesses gave testimony to Spanish officials. These testimonials can be found in Ayuntamiento to Viceroy, November 26, 1814, AGNPI, R261. A number of printed letters concerning Arredondo's actions in 1814 can also be found in Carlos Pérez Maldoñado, "El brigadier Joaquín de Arredondo y sus desavenencias con los cabildos de Monterrey," *Memorias* (May-August 1943): 102-127.

Minerva had incurred the wrath of the Spanish soldiers because she held in her hands a stone copy of the Constitution of 1812 that bore the inscription “the precious fruit of the wisdom of Congress.” Erected by Monterrey’s liberal *ayuntamiento* in 1812, Minerva had been an eyesore to royalists like Captain Fernández who had resented the constitution and the liberal ideas that it proponed. Although Ferdinand’s absence had forced Fernández and other royalists to accept the constitution, with the king returned to his throne and the constitution dismissed, it was time for someone—or in this case something—to pay for the time royalists had been forced to bow to liberals. Minerva, with the pretentious declaration of enlightenment held in her hand, made an excellent target.²³²

Fernández and his drunken army fired on Minerva for over an hour. When their labors managed only to knock off the stone constitution and one arm, Fernández sent servants to get an ox. Upon their return, Fernández tied the ox to the statue, forced the animal to walk, and, in what must have been a darkly comical scene, finally managed to drag Minerva to the ground. The royalists responded to their victory over the inanimate object with shouts of unbridled glee. In a grotesque distortion of Hidalgo’s call for revolution, the inebriated soldiers cried “Death to the constitution,” “Death to the liberals,” “Viva King Ferdinand,” and finally “Viva Arredondo.” Fernández then positioned his portrait of Ferdinand VII atop the stone pedestal recently vacated by Minerva and placed guards around the painting with orders to shoot anyone who entered the square.²³³

²³² Rios, “Fusilamiento de la Diosa Minerva,”; José Sotomayor to Viceroy Calleja, November 26, 1814, AGNPI, R261.

²³³ Rios, “Fusilamiento de la Diosa Minerva”; Jáuregui, “La Guerra de Independencia en el noreste de la Nueva España y el comandante Joaquín de Arredondo”; José Sotomayor to Viceroy Calleja, November 26, 1814 (quotation). Sources disagree on the exact method in which the statue was finally destroyed and some mention the soldiers destroying a pyramid statue. I have given Rios’s version here.

The Spanish soldiers followed up their victory with a drunken romp through Monterrey. Cursing and firing their weapons at random targets, they went from house to house terrorizing citizens. They first stopped by the house of don Bernardino Cantú and began knocking loudly at his door. When don Bernardino refused to answer, Fernández's men fired a volley at his door before moving on to the home of Juan Tames. Tames, a liquor vendor and a member of Monterrey's *ayuntamiento*, opened his door to find men demanding brandy which they hoped to give to some "señoritas." When Tames provided the liquor, the soldiers left without paying and moved to harass the next house. The partying and vandalizing continued throughout the night. Some Spanish officers joined the rioters, handing out rum to the already inebriated troops. A few citizens also joined the revelers, but most closed their doors, choosing to suffer in the stifling summer heat rather than face potential abuse. The music continued throughout this revelry, as soldiers beat the musicians every time they took a break from playing. The party concluded only when people began to come out of their houses to attend first mass and the battered and bruised musicians used first light to escape their captors.²³⁴

Where was Arredondo while his soldiers terrorized Monterrey? Was he, somehow, unaware of the events taking place? Since his *casa grande* was less than a block away from the cathedral plaza, this is unlikely. Instead, it seems that don Joaquín had been aware of all that occurred, and because the rioters had targeted the homes of members of the liberal *ayuntamiento*, the rioting may have even taken place under Arredondo's orders. Indeed, it was reported that the partiers at one point came to the commandant general's house. Instead of berating his men and forcing them to return to their homes, Arredondo opened his door,

²³⁴ Rios, "Fusilamiento de la Diosa Minerva."

requested a glass of brandy, and went back inside upon receiving one. The following morning, while the citizens of Monterrey cleaned up after the events of the night before, the commandant general awoke and went about his work as if nothing had occurred. He punished no one, did not apologize for his men's actions, nor did he offer to pay for damages. As would be expected, the people of Monterrey were incensed by the commandant general's inaction and they would later blame him for the night's events. One historian suggested that because of this event, wherein Arredondo "chose to support the weak son of Charles IV over the goddess of wisdom and science," don Joaquín forever lost the support of the people of Monterrey.²³⁵

If the events of August 31, 1814, did not earn the ire of Monterrey's residents, what happened on October 9, 1814, likely did. On this day, Arredondo ordered his Veracruz battalion to go from house to house looking for revolutionary propaganda and suspicious materials. Under these orders, soldiers took to Monterrey's streets at 7:00 p.m. with guns in hand and detained any males they found outside their homes. The soldiers also broke down doors, roused people out of their beds, and took them into custody. No man was exempt and the targets appear to have been random. They took Indians, mestizos, Spaniards, rich, and poor. The soldiers gave no reason for their actions, other than saying that they were under orders of the commandant general. In later testimonials, victims claimed that soldiers threatened to beat them if they resisted. Others claimed that they were violently grabbed and forced outdoors

²³⁵ Rios, "Fusilamiento de la Diosa Minerva" (quotation); Ayuntamiento to Viceroy, November 26, 1814, AGNPI, R261.

without clothes. Soldiers even took the extremely ill into custody. The raids continued into the morning, with Arredondo's men detaining approximately 200 civilians.²³⁶

The men of the Veracruz battalion escorted their captives through town and imprisoned them in the San Xavier Cathedral. Without explanation, soldiers then released the prisoners at 10:00 a.m. the following morning and forced them to march in front of their neighbors in their disheveled clothes and pajamas. When citizens later complained to the viceroy about the degrading treatment, Arredondo feigned ignorance of the night's events—something that was almost assuredly untrue. After all, the men of the Battalion of Veracruz claimed to be operating under the commandant general's orders and, again, much of the commotion took place near don Joaquín's home.²³⁷

Why go through with such an elaborate charade with no readily apparent benefit? Because don Joaquín did not admit to knowledge of the events of August 31 and October 9, speculation is necessary. As Arredondo would later claim, he was blissfully unaware of both events; perhaps he was a very heavy sleeper. Because the events occurred near don Joaquín's home and his soldiers admitted that they were under Arredondo's orders on October 9, these explanations do not add up. One historian posited a more logical justification: Arredondo wanted to impart fear in the people of Monterrey. He had been unable to exercise fully his authority while the provincial deputation maintained some semblance of power. So logically, once the deputation was eliminated, Arredondo wanted to show the people of Nuevo León

²³⁶ García, *Las Provincias internas en el siglo XIX*, 119; José Sotomayor to Viceroy Calleja, November 26, 1814; Pérez, "Predominio Realista," 66; Maldoñado, "El brigadier Joaquín de Arredondo y sus desavenencias con los cabildos de Monterrey," 119.

²³⁷ José Sotomayor to Viceroy Calleja, November 26, 1814; García, *Provincias Internas en el Siglo XIX*, 119.

who was in charge and used violence to do so. As evidenced by his actions as governor of Nuevo Santander, don Joaquín was not above using cruel jokes to further his ends.²³⁸

Arredondo's actions in the last months of 1814 seem to confirm a strong desire for political dominance and royalist control. To enforce loyalty in the eastern provinces, don Joaquín issued a decree on September 24 denouncing the Constitution of 1812. The commandant general also ordered that every major town was to erect a monument to Ferdinand VII in their main plazas. Local leaders were to pay tribute to Spanish martyrs and encourage public displays of allegiance to the crown. Don Joaquín also decreed that—in addition to reading, writing, and the Catholic catechism—students were to learn civic responsibility so they would be “useful to the state.”²³⁹

The church was not exempt from the commandant general's edicts. Continuing the rivalry that he had begun with the local diocese on his first day in Monterrey, Arredondo refused to attend a special Mass meant to honor his victory at the Battle of Medina. He also tried to dissolve the Monterrey Cabildo, claiming that it was a product of the Constitution of 1812. When members reminded don Joaquín that Monterrey had had a cabildo since shortly after its founding in 1596, Arredondo instead used his authority as commandant general to remove aldermen and then held an election to fill the seats. The cabildo agreed to this change because it feared retaliation.²⁴⁰

²³⁸ José Sotomayor to Viceroy Calleja, November 26, 1814; García, *Provincias Internas en el Siglo XIX*, 119; Pérez Maldoñado, “El brigadier Joaquín de Arredondo y sus desavenencias con los cabildos de Monterrey,” 119. For the use of insults in politics in New Spain, see Ramos, *Identity, Ritual, and Power in Colonial Puebla*, 180-181.

²³⁹ Valerio-Jiménez, “Neglected Citizens and Willing Traders,” 270. Because Valerio-Jiménez does not cite specific sources, it is unclear if the schooling orders were a part of this edict or a separate one.

²⁴⁰ Enderle, “Contrabando y liberalismo,” 165-169.

Arredondo also complained to Viceroy Calleja that the church-administered military hospital was in poor condition and argued that he should assume control of the facility. Don Joaquín even sent Calleja an inspection by a military surgeon claiming that the hospital was dirty and lacking in medicine. Church officials replied that they could not properly administer the hospital because Arredondo took their money and did not provide them with necessary supplies. Even still, the surgeon who performed the inspection was a friend of don Joaquín who the commandant general allowed to have a monopoly on medicine in Monterrey. The two sides argued back and forth from 1814 to 1816 before Calleja settled the matter by placing don Joaquín in charge of the hospital. Unfortunately, this did not end matters. When church officials tried to inspect the hospital to ensure that the commandant general maintained it in good condition, they were denied entry. Monterrey's bishop also reported that Arredondo named Miguel Pages, a fellow Catalan who had fought with the Veracruz Battalion, the hospital's head surgeon. According to the bishop, this was a problem because Pages was not a doctor, and he sold medicine at unreasonable prices to pay for passage back to Spain.²⁴¹

The commandant general feud with the church went beyond disagreements about the hospital. In 1815, Arredondo forced the Monterrey cathedral chapter to loan his government money. When the chapter came up with only 1,180 pesos, don Joaquín led an appraisal of the chapter's finances and determined that they needed to provide 50,000 pesos. By 1818, 36,000 of this sum had been collected, 3,569 of which came from leading cleric José Miguel.²⁴²

²⁴¹ Charles H. Harris, *A Mexican Family Empire: The Latifundio of the Sánchez Navarros, 1765-1867* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975), 120; Jáuregui, "La Guerra de Independencia en el noreste de la nueva España y el comandante Joaquín de Arredondo"; Enderle, "Contrabando y liberalismo," 161-162.

²⁴² Harris, *A Mexican Family Empire*, 120; Jáuregui, "La Guerra de Independencia en el noreste de la nueva España y el comandante Joaquín de Arredondo."

Don Joaquín also developed a rivalry with Monterrey's local *ayuntamiento*. Essentially, New Spain's ayuntamientos were the equivalent of city councils. They imposed city taxes, maintained roads and public buildings, and assembled militiamen for a city's defense. Traditionally, ayuntamiento members were wealthy elites who had gained their position through heredity and wealth. They acted independently of the governor, but since governors approved ayuntamiento membership, the bodies often found it best to work with governors on most matters. The Monterrey ayuntamiento, however, was unique. Because Nuevo León had been without a governor since 1811—except for a brief stint in 1813 when Ramón Díaz Bustamante served in the capacity—the Monterrey ayuntamiento received viceregal permission to adopt the governor's responsibilities.²⁴³

It was in this capacity that the Monterrey ayuntamiento had earned don Joaquín's ire. In 1813, Arredondo had asked the Monterrey ayuntamiento to send money and militiamen for his invasion of Texas. Speaking for the rest of the council, Ramón Perea denied don Joaquín's request. He needed available men to remain in Nuevo León to work the fields during harvest season and to defend Monterrey in case of insurgent attack. He also countered that, as acting governor, raising militia and taxing was the ayuntamiento's responsibility, not Arredondo's. Don Joaquín disregarded these explanations and chose to believe that the liberal ayuntamiento had refused his requests because rebel sympathizers made up the body. The same spies who had determined that the provincial deputation contained insurgent sympathizers—the deputation and ayuntamiento seem to have shared members—discovered that don Joaquín's suspicions

²⁴³ Haring, *The Spanish Empire in the Americas*, 167-169; Benson, *Provincial Deputation*, 12-13.

were correct. Many in the ayuntamiento wanted to see New Spain independent of its mother country.²⁴⁴

Armed with this information, don Joaquín quarreled with the ayuntamiento from the moment he arrived in Monterrey. Unable to dismiss the body as he had done the provincial deputation, it seems that Arredondo turned to physical and mental harassment to break the ayuntamiento's will. Conspicuously, on August 31—after destroying the ayuntamiento-erected statue of Minerva—Arredondo's soldiers chose to vandalize the homes of city council members. It seems that ayuntamiento politicians had also been among those taken prisoner the night of October 9. Although it is impossible to determine if don Joaquín's men intentionally targeted ayuntamiento members during these incidents, the commandant general's actions on October 14, demonstrated a willingness to humiliate his political opponents. Claiming to offer a gesture of reconciliation, don Joaquín invited the ayuntamiento and church leaders to join him at his casa grande house at 9 a.m. to celebrate King Ferdinand's birthday. When the council members arrived, soldiers barred them from entering the home. After the ayuntamiento members managed to push their way past the guards, they found that don Joaquín was not present. They waited for two hours before the commandant general casually strolled in, acted surprised, and claimed that the council members must have been mistaken. Arredondo had said 11 a.m.²⁴⁵

In response to this humiliation, in November 1814, the ayuntamiento called witnesses to testify about don Joaquín's actions over the previous months. In testimony after testimony, citizens complained about the violent and dehumanizing manner in which the Battalion of

²⁴⁴ Pérez, "Predominio Realista," 66; Jáuregui, "La Guerra de Independencia en el noreste de la Nueva España y el comandante Joaquín de Arredondo."

²⁴⁵ Ayuntamiento to Viceroy, November 26, 1814, AGNPI, R261. For similar uses of ritual to demonstrate the dominance of military authority over secular and clergy in New Spain, see Ramos, *Identity, Ritual, and Power in Colonial Puebla*, 168-174.

Veracruz had treated them and blamed the commandant general for not punishing his men. On November 26, the ayuntamiento sent these testimonials to Viceroy Calleja with a three-page letter summarizing Arredondo's misdeeds and poor decision-making. The ayuntamiento members held back nothing. They derided don Joaquín's actions in Texas, claiming his decision to disarm Texas's citizens and his forced enlistments into the local militia had promoted conflict with the region's Indians. They also chastised don Joaquín for ignorance of local laws and customs. And, of course, the ayuntamiento recounted the events of August 31 and October 9. Although the council stopped short of suggesting that the viceroy remove Arredondo, it made clear something needed to be done to stop don Joaquín's despotism.²⁴⁶

Calleja received the ayuntamiento's charges, but dismissed them in July 1815. He believed council and church officials should submit to his friend's authority. Whenever the viceroy received a complaint about heavy-handed royalist actions, he countered that such actions were necessary to defeat revolutionaries. Anything less would be an erosion of Spanish authority. One historian remarked of Calleja's propensity to overlook his subordinates' indiscretions, "in all the history of colonial Spanish America there is hardly another instance, outside of the initial conquest phase, of so unashamed a dependence on naked force." Without Calleja's support, the ayuntamiento had little recourse against don Joaquín. Indeed, it seems that Arredondo was able to place his own men on the council in elections in 1815. Although the ayuntamiento would continue to serve as the governor of Nuevo León until 1816, the Arredondo-aligned body would take its cues from the commandant general. The provincial deputation was gone, the church had ceded some of its authority, and the ayuntamiento was

²⁴⁶ Ayuntamiento to Viceroy, November 26, 1814, AGNPI, R261.

neutered. Almost all civic and military matters in northeastern New Spain were now the domain of the commandant general.²⁴⁷

It seems that this unbridled power went to don Joaquín's head, as he began to believe that he was Calleja's equal and was subordinate only to the king. Since assuming the commandancy general in 1813, Arredondo had sought Calleja's approval and council in almost all matters, but by 1815, the commandant general obeyed the viceroy only when convenient. He also begun claiming that the Eastern Internal Provinces were independent of the rest of New Spain and although his office required him to report to the viceroy, he did not have to obey him. Ironically, the defunct Constitution of 1812 may have spawned Arredondo's insubordination. It contained the line: "Political government of the provinces resides with the superior chief, each one nominated by the King." Calleja interpreted this "superior chief clause" to mean that he was the supreme authority over all areas of the colony, which included the eastern provinces. New Spain's *Comisión de Consulta*, *Fiscal del Gobierno*, and *Auditor del Gobierno* agreed with Calleja²⁴⁸

Arredondo did not. He saw himself as the "superior chief" of the Eastern Internal Provinces and maintained this view even when Ferdinand's abrogation of the Constitution of 1812 should have rendered the "superior chief clause" debate moot. Instead, the dismissal of the constitution seems to have increased Arredondo's disobedience. By 1816, the commandant general had stopped responding to Calleja's orders and operated almost independently of Mexico City. It is unclear what initiated this change. Perhaps don Joaquín's had grown power

²⁴⁷ Enderle, "Contrabando y liberalismo, 166-169; Anna, "The Last Viceroys of New Spain and Peru," 50-51 (quotation on page 51); Pérez Maldoñado, "El brigadier Joaquín de Arredondo y sus desavenencias con los cabildos de Monterrey," 126; Pérez, "Predominio Realista," 66.

²⁴⁸ Pérez, "Predominio Realista," 66; Ferguson "The Spanish Tamerlaine," 138-142, 240 (quotation on page 138); Anna, "The Last Viceroys of New Spain," 43-46.

hungry. Maybe the disobedience Arredondo had displayed toward Venegas was reemerging after a dormant period. Calleja and don Joaquín may have disagreed on a private matter, and it showed itself in their political cooperation. Perhaps Arredondo had always felt himself superior to Calleja, but had maintained the illusion of subordination to encourage the viceroy to send him reinforcements and supplies. By 1815, Calleja could not even do this with many of don Joaquín's requests for supplies going unanswered. With the eastern provinces now at peace and assistance from Mexico City halted, there was no longer a reason to maintain the illusion. Why should his provinces be subordinate?²⁴⁹

Don Joaquín's newfound independent spirit prompted the viceroy to dispatch Diego García Conde to speak with Arredondo in 1816. Calleja chose Conde as his messenger because he had served alongside don Joaquín as a cadet in the Spanish military, and the two remained friends into adulthood. Conde was also preparing to assume the commandant general position in the Western Internal Provinces, an office he understood to be subordinate to the viceroy. As such, Calleja sent Conde to Monterrey with unofficial orders to "promote obedience and subordination to the Viceroy," and explain the limits of the commandant general's office to don Joaquín. Officially, however, Conde was traveling to Monterrey to inspect the men of the Extremadura regiment. Under these orders, the new commandant general of the western provinces traveled to Monterrey in summer 1816 and met with his old friend. Although the details of Conde's visit have been lost to time, it is apparent that not only was he unable to

²⁴⁹ Ferguson, "The Spanish Tamerlaine," 138-142, 240; Fajardo M. Palacio. *Outline of the Revolution in Spanish America, Or, an Account of the Origin, Progress, and Actual State of the War Carried on between Spain and Spanish America: Containing the Principal Facts which Have Marked the Struggle* (New York: James Eastburn and Co, 1817), 205-206.

convince Arredondo to submit to Calleja's authority, the visit, instead, seems to have increased don Joaquín's animosity towards the government in Mexico City.²⁵⁰

Conde's failure forced Calleja to accept Arredondo's insubordination. He had no other choice. He did not have the supplies, manpower, or initiative to travel the distance between Mexico City and the Eastern Internal Provinces to depose don Joaquín by force. Nor did he have the political influence to ask the king to remove Arredondo. Indeed, many prominent officials in New Spain—such as General José de la Cruz in Guadalajara—were openly petitioning the crown to remove Calleja from office. The viceroy also had pressing issues to deal with rather than the insubordinate, yet still royalist officer; the aforementioned General De la Cruz also refused to follow the viceroy's orders. Indeed, Calleja may have realized that in spite of his failures, don Joaquín was too valuable to dismiss. He was a competent battlefield commander who was familiar with the nature of the insurgency in northeastern New Spain. As such, the viceroy realized that he had little choice but to allow men like Arredondo and De la Cruz a large degree of autonomy. Reminiscent of former Viceroy Venegas's proclamation, in 1816, Calleja remarked that there were "three viceroys in New Spain... [one] in Mexico City, Cruz in Guadalajara, and Arredondo in Monterrey."²⁵¹

²⁵⁰ Alamán, *Historia de México*, Vol. IV, 465; Ferguson "The Spanish Tamerlaine," 143-144; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 351; Jáuregui, "La Guerra de Independencia en el noreste de la Nueva España y el comandante Joaquín de Arredondo" (quotation).

²⁵¹ Ferguson "The Spanish Tamerlaine," 144, 240 (quotation on page 144).

CHAPTER 8

A GOVERNMENT OF ORDER AND GOOD ADMINISTRATION, 1815-1816

Arredondo was a heartless tyrant, [but] his government was one of order and good administration.

David A. Cossio

If Arredondo happened to pick up a September 23, 1815, copy of the United States periodical *Enquirer*, he would have read that insurgent Matías “El Pachón” Ortiz had amassed a peasant army, taken control of most of northeastern New Spain’s countryside, and defeated Arredondo in battle in July 1815. Although El Pachón had “taken or killed” most of the royalist army, don Joaquín and seventy “nearly naked” soldiers somehow managed to escape, but they had to abandon Monterrey to the insurgents. According to American newspapers, Arredondo was currently in flight to Texas where he hoped to muster the province’s 600 starving troops for a final showdown with the oncoming revolutionaries. Unfortunately, the *Enquirer* reported that El Pachón was but one of don Joaquín’s problems. Guitérrez de Lara and Toledo were gathering an army in Louisiana to invade Texas and a second insurgent force was moving up the Gulf Coast in preparation to attack San Antonio. To anyone reading American newspapers in the summer of 1815, it looked like the eastern provinces were about to fall.²⁵²

This news would have come as a surprise to don Joaquín, who had spent the past three months sitting comfortably in his Monterrey headquarters. Although El Pachón was real, he had not defeated Arredondo in battle, nor had he captured Monterrey. Indeed, the insurgent does not seem to have stepped foot in the eastern provinces in 1815. Royalists in San Luis Potosí had

²⁵² “From South America,” *Republican Farmer*, July 26, 1815; “Mexico,” *Enquirer*, September 23, 1815; “Mexico,” *Washington Whig*, October 14, 1816. Almost nothing has been written on El Pachón. For a very brief bio of the man see, Bancroft, *History of Mexico*, Vol. 4, 524, 657.

defeated and scattered his forces in July. It was likely rumor or wishful thinking, then, that drove the *Enquirer's* account of El Pachón's exploits. Such rumors of insurgent uprisings and invasions from the United States regularly filtered into Arredondo's Monterrey headquarters in 1815. Although don Joaquín could dismiss some of these reports offhand, the presence of thousands of land hungry Americans just across the border and a continuing insurgency in other areas of New Spain, meant that he had to take some rumors seriously.²⁵³

Spain's foreign ambassador to the United States, don Luís de Onís, informed don Joaquín of one such rumor in March 1815. Having been in the United States since 1809, the competent and diligent Onís had ingratiated himself in American social circles where he sought information on United States involvement in New Spain's insurgency. His connections paid off when Onís learned that Frenchman Jean Joséph Amable Humbert was in New Orleans planning an invasion of Texas that would dwarf the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition. Humbert had led an exciting life. He had fought in the French Revolution, led an invasion of Ireland, served as a governor of Saint Domingue, and earned commendation as a general in Napoleon's army. In 1808, Humbert left France for the United States. He claimed he did so because he needed to escape France after his love of republicanism had led him to conflict with Napoleon's increasingly imperialistic and despotic government. Onís and Spanish leaders believed that, in reality, Napoleon had sent Humbert with orders to foment revolution in New Spain. Others contended that the French general came to drink away the remainder of his life. It is unclear if

²⁵³ Bancroft, *History of Mexico*, Vol. 4, 524, 657; Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. VI, 134-135. For an example of a letter concerning El Pachón, see Manuel María de Torres to Antonio Elozúa, September 28, 1815, BA, R55, F439-440;

escaping Napoleon, inciting revolution, or getting drunk served as Humbert's primary motivation, but in 1813, he found the perfect place to accomplish all three: New Orleans.²⁵⁴

Humbert happened to be in New Orleans during the final battle of the War of 1812 between the United States and Britain. The United States had declared war on Great Britain in 1812 over British violation of American neutral rights. Following two years of inconclusive fighting on the Atlantic Coast and the United States-Canadian border, Britain and the United States agreed to a cessation of hostilities in December 1814. Unaware of the peace, a British force landed near New Orleans and engaged the army of United States General Andrew Jackson in battle on January 8, 1815. Jackson's force was a motley mix of professional soldiers, militiamen, pirates, brigands, ne'er-do-wells, and Humbert, who had joined the Americans out of aversion for the imperial British. With Humbert's assistance, the Americans defeated the British in the Battle of New Orleans, earning the French general respect from United States soldiers and sailors. When news of the end of the War of 1812 reached New Orleans and left these same soldiers and sailors unemployed, Humbert convinced many among their number to continue the fight against imperialism by joining him in freeing Texas from Spain. The French general's words seem to have been effective. According to Onís, Humbert even convinced Gutiérrez de Lara and Toledo to put aside their differences and join his invasion. By May 1815,

²⁵⁴ Harris Gaylord Warren, "José Álvarez de Toledo's Initiation as a Filibuster, 1811-1813," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 20 (February 1940): 68-69; Juan Ramón de Andrés Martín, "La reacción realista ante las conspiraciones insurgentes en las fronteras y costas de Texas (1813-1816); Primeros antecedentes de la invasión de Javier Mina en 1817," *Signos históricos* 18 (July-December 2007): 11, 20-22; Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. VI, 128-129, 133; David E. Narrett, "Liberation and Conquest: John Hamilton Robinson and U.S. Adventurism toward Mexico, 1806-1819," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 40 (Spring 2009), 35-36. The proposed invasion from New Orleans was a complicated affair involving espionage, suspicious characters, and international politicking, the details of which are far too complex to go into detail here, especially considering that the expedition never took place. For a well-written overview of the proposed expedition, see William C. Davis, *The Pirates Laffite: The Treacherous World of the Corsairs of the Gulf* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2005), 258 and Harris Gaylord Warren, "The Southern Career of Don Juan Mariano Picornell," *The Journal of Southern History* 8 (August 1942): 311-333.

multiple sources reported that 3,000 men were preparing to follow Humbert, Gutiérrez de Lara, and Toledo into Texas.²⁵⁵

When Onís's report and news of the end of the War of 1812 reached Monterrey in March 1815, Arredondo realized he needed soldiers. He had fielded a 1,800-man army when he defeated Toledo and the Republican Army of the North a year and a half before, but after allowing his militiamen to return home and redeploying soldiers throughout the eastern provinces, the number of men under Arredondo's immediate command had fallen to some 300. Although these soldiers were veterans from his Veracruz Battalion and the Extremadura Regiment, it was doubtful that so few men could defend the eastern provinces should the rumors of Humbert's invasion prove true. And it was looking more and more true each day, as spies and travelers continued to report activity on the border. By April 1815, American newspapers were even running advertisements looking for 1,000 volunteers to join the invasion of Texas. Arredondo needed bodies and a plan.²⁵⁶

Throughout early 1815, don Joaquín used a variety of means to increase the size of the military. He offered partial amnesty to army deserters who returned to their duty stations within fifteen days. Instead of the normal harsh punishments, those who turned themselves in would receive community service. Deserters caught after this deadline would be sent to Texas for ten years or Veracruz for eight. Arredondo hoped that this measure would not only increase the size of the military, but decrease banditry, as many deserters had taken to robbing

²⁵⁵ Harris Gaylord Warren, "Documents Relating to Pierre Laffite's Entrance into the Service of Spain," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 44 (July 1940): 76-78; Martín, "La reacción realista ante las conspiraciones insurgentes," 11, 20-22. For a summary of the War of 1812, see Gordon S. Wood, *Empire of Liberty: A History of the Early Republic, 1789-1815* (New York: Oxford University Press), 659-700.

²⁵⁶ Mariano Varela to Joaquín de Arredondo, July 18, 1816, BA, R56, F784-786; Boyer and Spurling, *Colonial Lives*, 297. For an American newspaper warning of a coming invasion, see "Mexican Revolution," *Palladium of Liberty*, April 22, 1815.

merchants traveling between cities. With fewer bandits, Arredondo could then redeploy soldiers protecting roads to his army. In addition to his amnesty, in spring 1815, don Joaquín instituted a draft to raise four squadrons of cavalry, warning that those who evaded service, “will be destined to 10 years service with the veteran troops of Texas or 8 years with fixed battalion of veterans or 6 months in chains on public works.” Only public employees, certain types of businessmen, farmers, sons who supported widow mothers, sons of *alcaldes*, and members of the nobility were exempt from the draft. The number of persons conscripted using the amnesty and the draft remain unclear. If Arredondo’s frequent complaints about a shortage of fighting men are any indication, it does not appear to have been significant. In addition, the few recruits who did enter Spanish service seem to have been malcontents, criminals, imbeciles, and children, some as young as eight years of age. Such recruits made poor soldiers and were prone to desert whenever the opportunity arose.²⁵⁷

In addition to conscripting soldiers, Arredondo recalled Extremadura veterans from throughout the eastern provinces. Although there had been some 1,000 men from the Extremadura Regiment at the Battle of Medina, don Joaquín would be unable to muster nearly this number in 1815. Desertions and deaths had decreased the regiment’s complement, as had deployments to areas outside the internal provinces. It seems that some men, including those

²⁵⁷ A copy of the Arredondo’s draft requirements was put up for auction by Heritage Auctions. I found a copy in the auction’s pamphlet, which can be found here, http://books.google.com/books?id=4EUOSo5BMoIC&pg=PA8&lpg=PA8&dq=joaquin+de+arredondo+texana+auction&source=bl&ots=slGhb8lv4_&sig=8NR3fsoDcU0ZGmciDLhjHwK-mbs&hl=en&sa=X&ei=8DbHUqGIDYjKkAeS4YGACg&ved=0CC4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=joaquin%20de%20arredondo%20texana%20auction&f=false (accessed December 21, 2013). Arredondo Proclamation, April 24, 1815, AGNPI, R240; Ramos, *Beyond the Alamo*, 47.

protecting Texas's Indian frontier, were too valuable to recall. In addition, at least one Extremadura commander outright refused to comply with don Joaquín's orders.²⁵⁸

Lieutenant Colonel Francisco López had earned Arredondo's respect in 1813. He had been the soldier to discover the insurgent army prior to the Battle of Medina and had bravely dodged gunfire to report his findings to the Spanish army. Don Joaquín had rewarded this courage by placing López in charge of defending Aguayo with 150 Extremadura soldiers. It came as a surprise to the commandant general, then, when in June 1815, López refused to obey Arredondo's orders to redeploy his soldiers from Nuevo Santander to Texas. In a letter to the commandant general, the lieutenant colonel explained that he was comfortable in Aguayo and did not want to leave his new wife. Although he had considered bringing his spouse to Texas, he abandoned the idea, fearing that his wife's delicate nature could not handle such a trek. López apologized, but he would not be leaving Aguayo. As could be expected, Arredondo was furious upon reading López's letter and dispatched a letter of complaint to Viceroy Calleja. It is unclear, however, if the officer ever faced punishment for his disobedience.²⁵⁹

Don Joaquín could not concern himself with López, as reports of an imminent invasion continued to pour in throughout the summer of 1815. Unfortunately, details of the invasion differed from one account to the next. One had Humbert assaulting Tampico by sea. Another

²⁵⁸ Because keeping track of the men of the Extremadura Regiment and the rest of Arredondo's army is difficult, I have been unable to determine which Extremadura contingents were available in 1815. Martín, "La reacción realista ante las conspiraciones insurgentes," 21; Estado que manifiesta la fuerza efectiva del Regimiento Infantería de Extremadura, July 1814, AGNPI, R240.

²⁵⁹ Martín, "La reacción realista ante las conspiraciones insurgentes," 21; Estado que manifiesta la fuerza efectiva del Regimiento Infantería de Extremadura, July 1814; Arredondo, "Report of the Battle of Medina," 230. Arredondo recommended a Francisco López for promotion in his report to the viceroy on the Battle of Medina in 1817. This is probably the same Francisco López here. Interestingly, even though Arredondo sent his report to the viceroy two years after López's disobedience, he still recommended him for promotion based on his actions in the battle. The number of men under López's command in 1814 was 156, but varied from year to year.

indicated that the invaders were planning a dual land and sea invasion. Unable to determine which of the many possibilities was correct, don Joaquín dispatched spies to the border and sent messengers to round up intelligence from local Indian tribes. When these sources reported in May 1815 that the invasion was imminent and that it would follow the same path as the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition, don Joaquín formulated a plan. He informed Texas Governor Armiñán that he would be unable to provide men to defend San Antonio. Therefore, when the invaders entered Texas, Armiñán was to burn San Antonio to the ground, retreat south, and join his forces with Arredondo's in Laredo, where the Spanish army would make their stand. Don Joaquín likely authorized these scorched earth tactics because he knew that he could not defeat Humbert's purported 3,000-man army unless the invaders were emaciated from traveling long distances. Even then, it was unlikely that the few hundred men Arredondo had cobbled together would be able to stand against such an overwhelming force. Nevertheless, don Joaquín readied his soldiers and awaited word from Armiñán to ride for Laredo.²⁶⁰

The invasion never came. This owed, in part, to help from an unlikely source: United States President James Madison. Having been privy to the same rumors Arredondo had been hearing from Louisiana, Madison concluded that another invasion of New Spain from the United States would be a diplomatic embarrassment and could put his nation into conflict with a European power so soon after the conclusion of the War of 1812. To deter the filibusterers in Louisiana, then, on September 1, Madison issued his "Warning Against Unauthorized Military Expedition Against the Dominions of Spain." It stated,

²⁶⁰ Martín, "La reacción realista ante las conspiraciones insurgentes," 11, 20-22; Davis, *The Pirates Laffite*, 260-261; Joaquín de Arredondo to Benito de Armiñán, May 29, 1815, BA, R55, F155-157. Casteñeda contends that Arredondo actually left Monterrey for Laredo and reached the town on May 29, 1815. This does not appear to be the case, as Arredondo sent letters out of Monterrey on the day he was supposed to be in Laredo. See, Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. VI, 128-129.

Whereas information has been received that sundry persons citizens of the United States or residents within the same, and especially within the State of Louisiana, are conspiring together to begin and set on foot, provide, and prepare the means for a military expedition or enterprise against the dominions of Spain, with which the United States are happily at peace; that for this purpose they are collecting arms, military stores, provisions, vessels, and other means; are deceiving and seducing honest and well-meaning citizens to engage in their unlawful enterprises; are organizing, officering, and arming themselves for the same contrary to the laws in such cases made and provided: I have therefore thought fit to issue this my proclamation, warning and enjoining all faithful citizens who have been led without due knowledge or consideration to participate in the said unlawful enterprises to withdraw from the same without delay, and commanding all persons whatsoever engaged or concerned in the same to cease all further proceedings therein, as they will answer the contrary at their peril. And I hereby enjoin and require all officers, civil and military, of the United States or of any of the States or Territories, all judges, justices, and other officers of the peace, all military officers of the Army or Navy of the United States, and officers of the militia, to be vigilant, each within his respective department and according to his functions, in searching out and bringing to punishment all persons engaged or concerned in such enterprises, in seizing and detaining, subject to the disposition of the law, all arms, military stores, vessels, or other means provided or providing for the same, and, in general, in preventing the carrying on such expedition or enterprise by all the lawful means within their power. And I require all good and faithful citizens and others within the United States to be aiding and assisting herein, and especially in the discovery, apprehension, and bringing to justice of all such offenders, in preventing the execution of their unlawful combinations or designs, and in giving information against them to the proper authorities.²⁶¹

Madison's proclamation had its intended effect, at least in the short term. Although Toledo, Gutiérrez de Lara, and numerous other filibusterers remained in Louisiana and continued to plot a takeover of New Spain, Madison's edict forced them to be discrete. Newspapers, for example, would no longer carry ads calling for volunteers to invade Texas. The proclamation also seems to have dissuaded Humbert. Although he remained in New Orleans and would still travel in the circles of would-be insurgents, Humbert no longer wielded the

²⁶¹ Madison's proclamation can be found with an easy internet search. I used, James Madison, "Warning Against Unauthorized Military Expedition Against the Dominions of Spain," <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=65985#axzz1SZkjV59G> (accessed February 21, 2011).

influence he had in early 1815. The men who were to make up his invasion army went home, and the general took less of a leadership role in future invasion schemes. Although Arredondo continued to receive reports about Humbert's activities, other matters soon occupied his attention.²⁶²

The insurgency in New Spain had experienced a brief resurgence in 1814 under liberal reformer José María Morelos. Following Ferdinand VII's return to the throne and his dismissal of the Constitution of 1812, Morelos and like-minded liberals drew up the Constitution of Apatzingán in June 1814. In addition to dropping any pretext of loyalty to the crown, the Constitution of Apatzingán outlined a representative government for New Spain that divided power between executive, legislative, and judicial branches. Morelos assembled an army under the banner of this new document, and for the next year, rebels and royalists battled west of Mexico City for the political future of New Spain.²⁶³

Although Morelos and his new insurgency would bypass the eastern provinces, neighboring provinces would see a rise in anti-royalist attacks. For example, Matías "El Pachón" Ortiz and hundreds of followers fought the Spanish army in Guanajuato and Zacatecas in 1814. By June 1815, El Pachón had moved to San Luis Potosí where he robbed royalist silver shipments. Although El Pachón never entered the eastern provinces, it seems that Arredondo

²⁶² Madison, "Warning Against Unauthorized Military Expedition Against the Dominions of Spain"; Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. VI, 130; Testimony of the Baron de Bastrop, February 24, 1816, AGNPI, R239; Martín, "La reacción realista ante las conspiraciones insurgentes," 19. Some historians contend that Madison's proclamation was being disingenuous when forbidding filibustering in Texas. See, Frank Lawrence Owsley, Jr. and Gene A. Smith, *Filibusters and Expansionists: Jeffersonian Manifest Destiny*, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1997) and J. C. A. Stagg, "The Madison Administration and Mexico: Reinterpreting the Gutiérrez-Magee Raid of 1812-1813," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 59 (April 2002): 449-480.

²⁶³ For an excellent treatment of Morelos, see Ruben Hermesdorf, *Morelos: Hombre fundamental de México* (México, D.F.: Biorafias Gandesa, 1958). For a different interpretation of the Mexican War of Independence from 1815-1821, see Christon I. Archer, "Insurrection--Reaction--Revolution—Fragmentation: Reconstructing the Choreography of Meltdown in New Spain during the Independence Era," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 10 (Winter 1994): 63-98.

dispatched Captain Antonio Elosúa and a contingent of Extremadura men to support the royalists in San Luis Potosí. With Elosúa's assistance, the Spanish army managed to scatter El Pachón's forces.²⁶⁴

Although the eastern provinces remained quiet, don Joaquín believed that they would not remain so unless he took measures to promote loyalty among citizens. As he had done in Texas, don Joaquín turned to propaganda and bravado to accomplish this goal. In a decree on August 3, 1815, he called for loyalty to the king and claimed that insurgents planned to destroy religion and enslave the people of New Spain. He also reiterated that the Constitution of 1812 was invalid and that any copies of the document or other seditious material should be submitted to royal authorities. And as he had done in Texas, Arredondo required that all citizens of the eastern provinces wear a medal of loyalty. Those too poor to afford a medal had to wear a ribbon or bandana on their hats. The commandant general also asked citizens to donate baggage, medicine, and money to support the fight against revolutionaries.²⁶⁵

Interestingly, don Joaquín adopted a counterinsurgency strategy that was almost identical to one used by his father in the Río de la Plata during the French Revolution. As Nicolás Arredondo phrased it, "it is necessary to eliminate the idleness of certain people. Vagrants should be persecuted and punished without delays, because their hands have to be applied to productive activities for their own benefit and for the common good." In August 1814, don Joaquín reiterated his father's view in a public decree that stated, "Idleness is the mother to all the vices and it is the most hurtful thing to states. Idle and evil men corrupt the moral and

²⁶⁴ Bancroft, *History of Mexico*, Vol. 4, 524, 657; Manuel María de Torres to Antonio Elosúa, July 28, 1815. Multiple letters concerning Antonio Elosúa in San Luis Potosí can be found in BA R55. For an example, see Manuel María de Torres to Antonio Elosúa, June 2, 1815, BA, R55, F172-173.

²⁶⁵ Cossio, *Historia de Nuevo León*, 250-251; Arredondo Proclamation, April 24, 1815, AGNPI, R240.

social virtues of Republics and so there have been laws against them in all the kingdoms from ancient times. Unfortunately, I have seen that in the provinces under my control men from the countryside are plentiful in towns, idle men without occupation or profession who have lost all shame in walking naked. They engage in illegal trade and have grown used to suffering from hunger, sustaining themselves with parasite-infested and disease-filled food that promotes sickness among the population. To prevent such evils, I have ordered that all comply with what follows.” In other words, both Arredondo men believed that the unemployed corrupted society and were more likely to rebel than those with jobs.²⁶⁶

To put the unemployed to work, don Joaquín decreed that *alcaldes* in municipalities in the eastern provinces were to form a committee of reputable men. This body was then to give eight days for local men to verify employment by providing authorities with a certificate signed by their employer. If a person could not present a certificate after the designated time, they were to be forcibly enlisted in the military. Those not of fighting age were to be employed in local factories and mills. Women also had to work in honorable professions, exhibiting good conduct while doing so. Each month there was to be an investigation to ensure that people stayed employed. To discourage workers from fleeing into the countryside to avoid labor or enlistment, Arredondo required that anyone traveling outside cities carry a passport. Those found deserting their jobs were to be “punished with vigor.” Don Joaquín did not outline the exact punishment beyond this vague phrasing, but he probably called for public whippings, followed by forced enlistment in the army. City officials were to post the proclamation in public

²⁶⁶ Johnson, *Workshop of Revolution*, 77 (first quotation); Proclamation of Joaquín Arredondo, August 20, 1814, AGNPI, R240 (second quotation). Second quotation edited and summarized to make it more readable in English.

places and have town criers announce the edict's contents so no one could claim ignorance of the new rules.²⁶⁷

Arredondo also took defensive precautions in case revolution broke out in spite of his measures. One of his projects was to convert a massive building known as the Obispado into a defensive fortification. In 1787, Fray Rafael José Verger built the Obispado, or bishop's palace, on a ledge overlooking Monterrey as a retirement home. After Verger's death, the Obispado fell into disrepair and served as a storehouse for local art until Arredondo arrived in Monterrey. Realizing that all of Monterrey was visible from the Obispado's walls and that the building's location made it optimal for defensive purposes, in 1816, Arredondo ordered the Obispado repurposed into a barracks for his artillerymen. Soldiers transferred the building's artwork and ornaments to the military hospital of Nuestra Señora del Rosario and replaced it with beds and ammunition. For the next four years, Arredondo's men used the Obispado as a barracks, a place to store arms, and as a lookout post. They apparently did not take very good care of their home as one historian described the men as bringing, "destruction and ruin to the historical monument."²⁶⁸

In addition to housing his men, Arredondo had to approve or disapprove promotions, leave, and retirement. Upon receiving requests from soldiers asking to retire, the commandant general had to pore over the petitioner's service record to determine if they had fulfilled their obligation to the Crown. Although Arredondo sometimes disapproved retirement requests

²⁶⁷ Proclamation of Joaquín Arredondo, August 20, 1814 (quotation). As noted in Chapter V, Santa Anna was probably employed as one of the persons who checked employment for draft purposes.

²⁶⁸ Carlos Pérez-Maldonado, *El Obispado: Monumento Histórico de Monterrey* (Monterrey: Impresora del Norte, 1947), 53-54; Robles, "Monterrey Translation," 31. The Obispado not only survived Arredondo's men, but it would later serve as a defensive fortification for Mexican soldiers in the U.S.-Mexico War. Today the Obispado is home to the regional museum of Nuevo León.

owing to his need for fighting men, he allowed many soldiers to retire and provided them with a pension for their services. Don Joaquín also had the unfortunate responsibility of dispensing pensions to men who had received debilitating injuries in the line of duty and to the wives and children of men killed in battle. Whereas this duty may have filled the commandant general with dread, it seems that Arredondo enjoyed rewarding those he deemed competent, dedicated, hard working, and loyal. For example, when Viceroy Calleja refused to promote some soldiers who had served valiantly in the Battle of Medina, Arredondo continued to request the promotions for three years until his men finally received compensation.²⁶⁹

These pensions and salaries cost money. In order to meet these costs, don Joaquín doubled the *alcabala* tax on goods entering and leaving cities, added a surcharge to this tax, and implemented an additional convoy tax on goods traveling between cities. Arredondo allowed his soldiers to stop muleteers and take their mules and firearms as taxes. If a muleteer refused to pay, he would be conscripted into the army. In addition to mules and firearms, soldiers collected horses, non-perishable food, metal, and other goods as taxes. To procure liquid assets, don Joaquín required the wealthiest citizens of the eastern provinces to store two-thirds of their hard currency in the royal treasury. Depositors received receipts that could be redeemed for liquid assets at a later date.²⁷⁰

Don Joaquín's desire for hard currency may have had something to do with the proliferation of illegally forged currency in the Eastern Internal Provinces. Indeed, when Arredondo arrived in Monterrey, there were supposedly more counterfeit coins in circulation

²⁶⁹ Arredondo to Viceroy Calleja February 28, 1815, AGNPI, R104; Arredondo to Viceroy Apodaca, April 6, 1817, AGNPI, R104. Numerous examples of Arredondo granting pensions and promotion can be found in AGNPI R104.

²⁷⁰ Harris, *A Mexican Family Empire*, 118-119; Arredondo Proclamation, August 20, 1814; Valerio-Jiménez "Neglected Citizens and Willing Traders," 273-274.

than actual royal currency. Blaming the “rebels that followed Hidalgo” for the illicit counterfeiting, Arredondo rounded up goldsmiths capable of differentiating illegal coins from officially minted currency and ordered that anyone in possession of coinage must bring it to these goldsmiths for inspection. Officials would return valid currency to its owner, but keep illegal tender. To ensure that no more forged coins entered circulation, Arredondo threatened to execute counterfeiters and confiscate their property. Accomplices faced ten years imprisonment and similar property confiscation. If, however, someone were to report a counterfeiter, Spanish officials would reward him or her with 200 pesos and keep their identity a secret. The counterfeit dragnet recovered hundreds of illegal coins—coins that don Joaquín may have then minted for royalist use. It is not known if Arredondo had anyone put to death for counterfeiting.²⁷¹

Don Joaquín faced opposition to his new taxes and his economic reforms. Citizens in the eastern provinces, for example, claimed false tax exemptions and avoided customhouse officials and tax collectors. Smuggling was especially prevalent in Nuevo Santander and Texas. Realizing that Spanish officials used the census to calculate taxes, some in the eastern provinces hid from census takers or lied about the number of livestock they owned. Some simply refused to hand over their assets and prepared to face the consequences. One historian likened this noncompliance to “rebellious against the royal government.”²⁷²

This passive resistance was the extent of revolutionary activity in the eastern provinces in 1815 and 1816. Indeed, by 1816, the insurgency had faltered throughout New Spain. In

²⁷¹ Cossio, *Historia de Nuevo León*, 248-249.

²⁷² Valerio-Jiménez “Neglected Citizens and Willing Traders,” 273-274 (quotation on page 274); Harris, *A Mexican Family Empire*, 118-119.

November 1815, royalists defeated José María Morelos and the rebels who had rallied around the Constitution of Apatzingán. Morelos was then taken to Mexico City in chains, given a trial, convicted of treason, and executed. With no clear leader to rally behind, the movement for independence in New Spain quieted to a whisper.²⁷³

Although the people of the eastern provinces were free from war in 1815 and 1816, they had other problems—the most pressing of which was disease. With few doctors and inadequate hospitals, frontier settlements were susceptible to outbreaks of smallpox, yellow fever, malaria, and other communicable diseases. Epidemics were especially devastating in cities like Monterrey, Saltillo, and Monclova, where disease did not have to travel far from one carrier to another. The recent influx of rural residents fleeing to cities to avoid Indian and insurgent attacks made things worse, as roads and sewage systems were unable to handle the population surge. The resulting packed houses, dirty streets, and overflowing sewage would prove to be a boon to disease proliferation.²⁷⁴

A particularly devastating smallpox epidemic hit the eastern provinces in late 1814. An infectious disease, smallpox typically passes between hosts via bodily fluids. After infection and a twelve-day incubation period—a time in which the virus attacks the respiratory system, lymph nodes, and bone marrow—smallpox victims experience headaches, body aches, a rise in temperature, nausea, and vomiting. Shortly thereafter, hard, chitinous lesions erupt on infected skin. Then, one of two things follow: 70 percent of smallpox victims go through a two to three week period of excruciating pain before their body's white blood cells eradicate the smallpox

²⁷³ For more on Morelos, see Hermesdorf, *Morelos: hombre fundamental de México*.

²⁷⁴ Enrique Torres López and Mario A Santoscoy, *La historia del agua en Monterrey: desde 1577 hasta 1985* (Monterrey: Ediciones Castillo, 1985), 21-24; Michael C. Meyer, "Public Health in Northern New Spain," *Estudios de Historia Novohispana* II (1991): 138-139.

virus. The remaining 30 percent are unable to deal with the severe symptoms of infection, their body shuts down, and they die. Historically, the smallpox virus had been devastating in New Spain. When the Spanish first introduced the virus to the shores of what they would call New Spain, it and other communicable diseases wiped out as much as 95 percent of the American Indian population. Although native peoples acquired immunities and doctors developed techniques to prevent disease transmission and to treat symptoms, frontier communities lacking in hospitals and trained doctors continued to suffer. In 1646, for example, a smallpox epidemic in Monterrey killed some 500 people.²⁷⁵

It appeared that the 1814-1815 outbreak of smallpox would rival this death count. The disease seems to have first struck in Coahuila. In August 1814, Arredondo reported that almost 2,000 people in Saltillo were sick, with “many in misery, dying without assistance or medicine.” To prepare Monterrey, the commandant general dispatched Francisco García to Veracruz to procure needed pharmaceuticals and requested that Calleja send medicine, mattresses, food, and clean clothes. Don Joaquín also ordered a quarantine of infected areas. Those displaying symptoms had to remain at home. Infected cities were isolated. These measures proved ineffective, however, as the epidemic reached Monterrey by April 1815. Infected victims filled Monterrey’s two hospitals, where many slept on the floor for lack of cots. Although the number of people who died of smallpox in Monterrey is unknown, it must have been substantial, as

²⁷⁵ Joaquín Arredondo to Viceroy, January 21, 1815, AGNPI, R240; Weber, *Spanish Frontier in North America*, 28, 58; Meyer, “Public Health in Northern New Spain,” 142-143; William C. Foster, *Spanish Expeditions into Texas, 1689-1768* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995), 12. Descriptions of smallpox can be found in numerous locations online. I used the one on the Center for Disease Control website. See <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/smallpox/overview/disease-facts.asp> (accessed December 17, 2013).

accounts suggest there were not enough people to bury bodies properly. The dead littered roads until stray dogs consumed their infected flesh.²⁷⁶

Although he had been unable to prevent this outbreak, don Joaquín hoped to prevent future epidemics by vaccinating the population of the eastern provinces. Inoculations had been administered in northern New Spain since the 1780s. Initially, the most common forms of inoculation was a process called variolation, wherein a human smallpox lesion was removed from an infected body and introduced into an uninfected person in the hopes that the recipient would contract a milder form of the disease. By the time Arredondo arrived in Monterrey, however, a new form of vaccination had replaced variolation. In this procedure, doctors extracted pus from the sores of cowpox-infected dairy farmers and introduced the infected secretions into those who had never suffered from smallpox. The inoculated contracted the milder cowpox while developing antibodies against smallpox.²⁷⁷

Although Viceroy Calleja had issued instructions as to how to perform vaccinations in 1814 and sent vaccines to the Eastern Internal Provinces following the 1815 epidemic, many in northeastern New Spain were uneducated in the nature of disease and refused to be inoculated. Because the idea of intentionally infecting oneself with a virus was unappealing and seemingly unnatural, some citizens of the eastern provinces looked to shamans to cure smallpox. These medicine men prescribed vegetable soup with citric acid, water mixed with violets, ground up leaves of the chichiquelite plant, and other holistic remedies. They also performed religious rituals to cure patients. These practices were not only ineffective in

²⁷⁶ Joaquín de Arredondo to Viceroy Calleja, August 20, 1814 (quotation); Meyer, "Public Health in Northern New Spain," 142-143; Joaquín Arredondo to Viceroy, January 21, 1815, AGNPI, R240.

²⁷⁷ Meyer, "Public Health in Northern New Spain," 143, 145, 152; Thomas L. Percy, "The Control of Smallpox in New Spain's Northern Borderlands," *Journal of the West* 29 (July 1990): 95.

preventing future outbreaks but were also often detrimental to the infected. They also spread disease, since supposedly “cured” patients broke quarantine and infected others.²⁷⁸

To counter these superstitions, Arredondo ordered Monterrey’s city council to designate locations where citizens were to receive vaccinations. Those failing to report for vaccination faced punishment. Shamans who discouraged vaccination or prescribed alternative medicines for smallpox faced fines or banishment. The commandant general dispatched vaccines and similar instructions to other areas of the Eastern Internal Provinces. It appears the prohibition against shamanism worked, as it was not long before governors in the eastern provinces were complaining that they had run out of vaccine.²⁷⁹

Don Joaquín also oversaw improvements in Monterrey’s one-story, non-descript hospital for the poor. Although the cathedral chapter had run the local hospital since its construction in 1793, when don Joaquín arrived in Monterrey in 1814, he sought Viceroy Calleja’s permission to assume this duty. Arredondo claimed that he wanted to do so to improve conditions in the hospital. It lacked proper medicine and doctors, and the cathedral chapter had done a poor job maintaining the hospital. Church officials countered that don Joaquín wanted dominion over the hospital for political reasons. Viceroy Calleja sided with Arredondo, placed him in charge of the hospital, and sent needed medicine and supplies.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁸ Meyer, “Public Health in Northern New Spain,” 143. For the difficulties in transporting medicine to northern New Spain, see Andrés Reséndez, “Getting Cured and Getting Drunk: State versus Market in Texas and New Mexico, 1800-1850,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 22 (Spring 2002): 81-84.

²⁷⁹ Eduardo Cázares Puente, Claudia Roxana Domínguez García, and Miriam Martínez Wong, *Monterrey, origen y destino. Monterrey: revoluciones, guerras y comerciantes, 1808-1855* (Monterrey: Municipio de Monterrey, 2009), 46; Meyer, “Public Health in Northern New Spain,” 143.

²⁸⁰ Arredondo to Viceroy, August 20, 1814, AGNPI, R240. Examples of the letters between Arredondo and the viceroy can be found in AGNPI, R240. The church and Arredondo argued over the condition of the hospital throughout 1814 and 1815, with each side making accusations against the other.

While quarantines, medicine, and vaccines provided a short-term solution, Arredondo believed that Monterrey's unsanitary conditions would lead to another epidemic. Medical science had yet to differentiate between bacterial, viral, and parasitic infection and had not drawn a connection between mosquitoes and disease proliferation. As such, most educated people, including Arredondo, felt that in addition to addressing the contagious element of disease, something needed to be done about environmental factors. Disease was more likely to spread in areas with pollution and unsanitary living conditions, which created "bad air." Cities did not come much more unsanitary than Monterrey. Its residents bathed, defecated, and urinated in stagnant, muddy pools created from springs and creeks along the Santa Lucia River. Pigs joined human residents in these activities. The torpid filth pits provided a community center for contagion exchange and served as a perfect breeding ground for disease-carrying insects. During the rainy season, mud and filth from these pools frequently spilled into the Santa Lucia and Monterrey's streets. These streets, most of which were unpaved, became quagmires of disease-filled mud and fecal matter.²⁸¹

To eliminate "bad air" and prevent future outbreaks, then, Arredondo sent out an eight-step solution meant to improve the sanitary conditions of Monterrey. The proclamation required that homeowners construct elevated sidewalks to allow for comfortable foot traffic and to prevent disease-filled water from spilling over onto roads. Anyone who did not comply would be fined the amount it cost the city to complete the project. Arredondo also ordered city officials to supervise workers in leveling and paving major causeways. Roads and paths were to

²⁸¹Meyer, "Public Health in Northern New Spain, 138-139; Knaut, "Yellow Fever and the Late Colonial Public Health Response in the Port of Veracruz," 634-635; López and Santoscoy, *La historia del agua en Monterrey*, 21-24.

have side channels for runoff. The edict also required that any form of transport that would ruin paved streets must use alleyways or vacant lots to go about the city. Arredondo's reforms went beyond Monterrey. He required that landholders in other cities provide laborers, money, and equipment for clearing roads, digging channels, and building acequias and ordered that new settlements must be built on high ground away from rivers.²⁸²

Although paving streets was a promising first step to improving the overall sanitation of Monterrey, the main culprit for disease transmission was perhaps the Santa Lucia River. The citizens of Monterrey used the Santa Lucia as both a bathing spot and a source of drinking water. They also dumped their garbage in the river. This refuse included not only medical waste and feces, but also bodies of those killed by disease. To prevent further use of the river for these purposes, Arredondo ordered a ditch built adjacent to the Santa Lucia. The commandant general also improved local aqueducts and had dams built to control the river's water flow. Evidence suggests that the people of Monterrey followed through with these orders. Although he would not have known it at the time, Arredondo lessened the threat of future outbreaks by decreasing the number of stagnant pools in Monterrey and therefore lowering the number of breeding areas for disease carrying mosquitoes.²⁸³

As a final means of disease prevention, Arredondo placed restrictions on dog owners. In addition to keeping residents awake at night with their barking, packs of stray, flea-infested dogs roamed the streets of the Internal Provinces, rummaging through garbage and spreading contaminated waste. They also attacked humans. Apparently, stray dogs had become such a

²⁸² Cossio, *Historia de Nuevo León*, 254-255; Knaut, "Yellow Fever and the Late Colonial Public Health Response in the Port of Veracruz," 634-636; McEnroe, *From Colony to Nationhood*, 190.

²⁸³ López and Santoscoy, *La historia del agua en Monterrey*, 21-24; McEnroe, *From Colony to Nationhood*, 190; Cossio, *Historia de Nuevo León*, 254-255.

nuisance in Laredo, that the town's mayor felt it necessary to consult don Joaquín on the matter. With the commandant general's consent, the mayor warned that "the patrols assigned to night guard will kill" any dog not tied up or fenced.²⁸⁴

In addition to civic improvements, Arredondo expanded his knowledge of the provinces under his command. In 1815, for example, he set out from Monterrey for an inspection of nearby towns. The tour took him west to Coahuila; the first, and according to available sources, only time Arredondo would travel to this province during his time as commandant general. Don Joaquín's brief visit proved shocking, as Indians had laid waste to many areas of Coahuila. Unfortunately for the citizens of Coahuila, Arredondo would not address this problem, as he had to cut his tour short to deal with other matters.²⁸⁵

Perhaps because he could not conduct a personal tour, in 1815, Arredondo commissioned Juan Pedro Walker to map the Eastern Internal Provinces. Born in then-Spanish-controlled New Orleans in 1781, Walker's extensive travels and far-reaching knowledge made him an excellent mapmaker. He once even shared information with Zebulon Pike when the United States explorer was Spain's prisoner. Hoping for an accurate representation of the eastern provinces, don Joaquín ordered Walker to travel from Chihuahua to the Gulf Coast. Walker set out in fall 1815, but because Arredondo could not afford to supply him with a military escort, the mapmaker had to take his readings while avoiding Comanches and bandits. In spite of these difficulties, Walker provided Arredondo with a map of Coahuila and a map of the Eastern Internal Provinces with accurate representations of latitude and longitude. He was

²⁸⁴ Stan Green (ed.), *Border Scenes from the Laredo Archives* (Laredo, Tex.: Border Studies Publishing, 1991), 11-12 (quotation on page 12).

²⁸⁵ Cossio, *Historia de Nuevo León*, 251-252.

unable, however, to map Texas due to a bureaucratic mix-up, and it is unclear if the mapmaker sketched Nuevo Santander or Nuevo León. Arredondo copied Walker's maps and dispatched them to the governors of the eastern provinces.²⁸⁶

Although Walker does not seem to have inspected Nuevo Santander or Texas, Manuel Zambrano did. In 1815, Arredondo commissioned Zambrano, who had fought with the royalists during the Battle of Medina, to provide a detailed description of the Rio Grande Valley. In particular, don Joaquín wanted Zambrano to suggest locations for settlements and presidios between the isolated Texas villages and the more populous Nuevo Santander. In a detailed report, Zambrano concluded that the Rio Grande Valley was extremely fertile, and he offered the opinion that Arredondo should grant free land to poor families and vagrants to encourage settlement of the region. Soldiers would be needed to protect settlers from Indians. Zambrano also recommended that a port be opened in Matagorda Bay to further commerce on the Rio Grande. After reading Zambrano's report, Arredondo requested funds from the Spanish government for the project. Although he received permission to grant free land, Mexico City sent no money for soldiers or a port in Matagorda Bay. With no protection from Indians and no means to bring goods to market, it is not surprising that few settled in the Rio Grande Valley in the following years.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁶ Elizabeth H. John, "Mapmaker Juan Pedro Walker," in *Essays on the History of North American Discovery and Exploration*, ed. Stanley H. Palmer and Dennis Reinhartz (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1988), 103, 117, 121, 124-127; Elizabeth A. H. John, "Walker, Juan Pedro," *Handbook of Texas Online* <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fwaax> (accessed January 03, 2014). Randall Rogers, *Two Particular Friends of Stephen F. Austin* (Waco: Texian Press, 1990), 49-50. See also Vito Alessio Robles, *Coahuila y Texas en la época colonial* (Mexico, D.F.: Editorial Cultura, 1938). For some reason, John did not mention the 1815 maps that Walker successfully made for Arredondo in her article; instead, she focused on Walker's failure to make a map of Texas. There is a possibility that Walker did not construct the 1815 maps, but as the maps were created at the same time that Walker was on his mapping expedition this is unlikely.

²⁸⁷ Hatcher, *The Opening of Texas*, 250-254; Arredondo, "Report of the Battle of Medina," 231.

An interesting report came across Arredondo's desk on August 11, 1815. Apparently, a man named Ignacio Arocha had arrived in Monterrey claiming that the ghost of don Joaquín's former subordinate Ignacio Elizondo had appeared before his wife. During this spectral encounter, Elizondo's apparition revealed that he had been "condemned for following the unjust cause." The unjust cause that the ghost referred to was, of course, the royalist cause—Elizondo was the man who had betrayed Hidalgo and had wantonly killed insurgents in East Texas. These actions made the deceased Spaniard very unpopular among those who favored independence. If Arocha were to be believed and Elizondo had really appeared before his wife, it seems that God was also upset with Elizondo, as he had condemned the former officer to eternal damnation.²⁸⁸

After receiving word of Arocha's rant, Arredondo had his aide don Juan María Martínez arrest the blasphemer, lock him in solitary confinement, and search his baggage for seditious literature. Although Martínez discovered no seditious literature, don Joaquín ordered Felipe de Garza to interrogate the prisoner, as well as anyone with whom he may have spoken. Arocha and the various witnesses offered confusing and contradictory testimonials. Some claimed that Arocha had said nothing about a ghost. Others asserted that Arocha had said that it was his servant who had seen Elizondo and that the apparition had left a handprint on a doorway as proof of its existence. Still others said that Arocha was lying to promote the insurgent cause. Arredondo's investigators determined this latter reason to be true upon discovering that

²⁸⁸ Isidro Vizcaya Canales, "La apariciones de Ignacio Elizondo," *Revista Coahuilense de Historia* 87 (September-October 1992): 58-62.

Arocha had painted Elizondo's "handprint" on the doorway. As punishment, don Joaquín banned Arocha from the eastern provinces.²⁸⁹

In addition to ghosts, viruses, and invaders, Arredondo engaged in hedonistic pursuits in 1815 and 1816. Although he prohibited *bailes* and fiestas in other areas of the eastern provinces, the commandant general had no qualms about holding public celebrations in his capital. He allocated government funds for fiestas on religious occasions, government holidays, and royal birthdays—celebrations that likely involved bullfights, music, dancing, and copious consumption of wine and sotol liquor. Arredondo even brought the biggest religious and commercial celebration in northeastern New Spain to Monterrey: the Saint James Fair. Beginning in the seventeenth century, citizens from throughout New Spain had made a yearly pilgrimage to Saltillo to trade and enjoy fireworks, bullfights, and confections. By the end of the eighteenth century, the fair had become the pride of Saltillo and was the largest commercial gathering in northeastern New Spain. It must have been a shock to the town, then, when don Joaquín declared Monterrey to be the fair's new home. He reasoned that with the fair in Monterrey, it would be easier for royal officials to check for international contraband and to collect taxes from merchants. The citizens of Saltillo were understandably displeased with the change. Before Arredondo's arrival, their city had been the commercial and political center of the eastern provinces, not Monterrey.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁹ Canales, "La apariciones de Ignacio Elizondo," 58-62.

²⁹⁰ Jesús F. de la Teja "St. James at the Fair: Religious Ceremony, Civic Boosterism, and Commercial Development on the Colonial Mexican Frontier" *The Americas* 57 (January 2001), 408, 410; Arnolando Hernández Torres, "La feria de Santiago del Saltillo encrucijada de vendimias, fiestas religiosas y diversiones populares, 1777-1815," *Provincias Internas* IV (2004) 115-116. De la Teja and Torres disagree on the state of the St. James Fair during the independence era. De la Teja argued that the fair shut down, while Torres believed that it moved to Monterrey. I accepted Torres's interpretation because he appears to have used more sources from Monterrey. There remains the possibility that the fair in Monterrey was not officially the St. James Fair, but a Monterrey

A notorious womanizer and philanderer, Arredondo likely attended these various fiestas in the company of a mistress. Indeed, it seems that don Joaquín had multiple mistresses in Monterrey and was unafraid of going out in public with them. According to one story, one evening Arredondo ordered musicians to rouse his soldiers from their sleep with music. Once awake, don Joaquín told his men to march in rank in front of his female guest. Although the identity of this particular woman is unknown, perhaps it was Pio Quinta, whom Arredondo had met in Nuevo Santander and brought on campaign in Texas. It may also have been Joséfa González. Not much is known about doña Joséfa, except that she and Arredondo had an illegitimate child, Carmen González Arredondo.²⁹¹

What was don Joaquín's attitude toward women? This is a difficult question to answer because little personal correspondence concerning women in his life has been found. As many powerful Spanish men of the time, Arredondo likely saw women as refined, but lacking certain capacities that men possessed. He was misogynistic, possibly extremely so if the reports that he allowed his men to rape the women of La Quinta are true. Although there is no evidence that Arredondo raped any of the women of La Quinta, it seems that he was not above forcing women to work for him against their will. In October 1816, for example, the commandant general ordered Ignacio Pérez to send two captured Comanche females to his headquarters in

alternative that replaced the Saltillo fair during the era of independence. See also Jesus F. de la Teja, "The Saltillo Fair and Its San Antonio Connections" in *Tejano Epic: Essays in Honor of Félix D. Almaráz, Jr.*, eds. Félix D. Almaráz and Arnoldo de León (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2005), 15-27. Arredondo's love of festivities are described in Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810* and Robles, *Coahuila y Texas en la época colonial*.

²⁹¹ *Lamar Papers*, Vol. 6, 338; Robles, "Translation of Monterrey," 180. There is a possibility that Robles may be referring to the instance where Arredondo had his men wake up the people of Aguayo, not a separate incident in Monterrey. According to a San Antonio newspaper, in 1942, Alessio Robles wrote a synopsis of Arredondo's womanizing for the journal *Actividades* of Monterrey. I was unable to locate this article or even find a single copy of the discussed journal. See, "Gajos de Historia," *Prensa*, April 29, 1948.

Monterrey, where they were likely to be either domestic servants or consorts. Fortunately, the two Comanche women avoided serving in either of these roles, as they escaped captivity before reaching Monterrey.²⁹²

Because there are no known letters between don Joaquín and his wives, discussion of don Joaquín marriages must be taken as conjecture. Did Arredondo love his first wife? It would be reasonable to assume no; Arredondo married more for social and economic reasons than love. He entered the union in order to obtain a dowry, procreate, and to transfer his patrimony, something that was common for marriages in nineteenth century Spanish society. That he was preparing to remarry less than six months after his first wife's death seemingly confirms this notion. The short interval between marriages, however, could also mean that don Joaquín was a heartbroken man reaching out for the comfort of another woman. There is no way of knowing based on present data.²⁹³

More information is available on don Joaquín's relationship with his second wife, Guadalupe de Moral. It is known, for example, that Arredondo had many extramarital dalliances while betrothed to Guadalupe. Although such affairs were common among prominent men in New Spain, the result of the affairs was not: don Joaquín and Guadalupe separated in 1815. Separation between man and wife was uncommon among Spanish upper class society and was looked down upon. Apparently such societal norms were set aside on the

²⁹² Arredondo to Ignacio Pérez, October 16, 1816, BA, R57, F198-205. For a look at females in Spanish-Indian relations, see Juliana Barr, *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

²⁹³ Joaquín de Arredondo to Viceroy, June 22, 1809, Legajo #2463, Arredondo File, AGMS; Don Miguel Sánchez de la Guerra Cura to José Benavides, June 2, 1809, Legajo #2463, Arredondo File, AGMS; Testimony of Baptism of María Guadalupe, undated, Legajo #2463, Arredondo File, AGMS; Manuel del Moral to José Clemente Sánchez, June 22, 1809, Legajo #2463, Arredondo File, AGMS; Bennassar, *The Spanish Character*, 183; Lavrin and Couturier, "Dowries and Wills," 282-286.

frontier, as Guadalupe moved to nearby Saltillo and live independent of don Joaquín for the remainder of her life. For a brief time, Arredondo provided Guadalupe with a stipend for living expenses.²⁹⁴

It is apparent, at least, that don Joaquín cared for his mother and daughters. He never had an unkind word for his mother and tried to care for her in her old age. Don Joaquín also seems to have felt affection for his illegitimate daughter, Carmen, as he provided for the young girl. The woman to whom it appears that don Joaquín had the most affection, however, was his daughter, Joaquína, a product of his first marriage. Joaquína, had joined her father in Monterrey at some point before 1816, and it is likely that she lived with her father in his casa grande headquarters. Though pleased to have the company, Arredondo chastised himself for forcing his daughter to live on the frontier without access to the fineries of European life.²⁹⁵

In February 1816, don Joaquín received an unusual request from one of his junior officers, twenty-four-year-old José de Castro. Born in Andalucía, Spain, to a noble family, Castro was the captain of the Veteran Company of the Point of Lampazos, a part of the Extremadura Regiment assigned to Nuevo Santander. He had fought Napoleon's forces as a cadet and had been deployed to New Spain in 1813. He began serving under Arredondo that year as a member of the Extremadura reinforcements sent by the viceroy to retake Texas. Don Joaquín quickly grew to respect the young officer, whom he described as being "talented" and "a good member of his staff." He also saw Castro's potential to earn a prominent position in the Spanish

²⁹⁴ Robles, "Translation of Monterrey," 180. Bennisar, *The Spanish Character*, 182-183; Guadalupe del Moral Petition, February 8, 1822, Archivo de Cancelados. Exp. XI/111/3-13, SDN.

²⁹⁵ Arredondo to Viceroy February 17, 1816, AGNPI, R239.

military. With such a promising future, it pleased the commandant general when Castro approached his superior and asked for his daughter's hand in marriage.²⁹⁶

Spanish law, however, prevented commandant generals and their children from marrying someone living in the region under their command. The reasoning behind the law was sound. If a high official married into a local family, they could pass laws to benefit their relatives. In a letter to Viceroy Calleja on February 17, 1816, Arredondo argued that the purpose of the law was not applicable in the case of a marriage between José and Joaquína. Castro was from Spain, where he would be returning soon. He therefore had no local ties or apparent ulterior motives for marrying the commandant general's daughter. Arredondo also explained that it would be difficult for his daughter to find a man of Castro's character and noble lineage while her father was stationed along the frontier. In addition to these logical reasons, Don Joaquín appealed to Calleja on a personal level. He explained that his daughter had no one to confide in. She had lost her mother, who left her without an inheritance, and she had no brothers or sisters. In a moment of rare humility, Arredondo cursed himself for his daughter's plight, noting that, "it is my fault that she cannot maintain the decent lifestyle to which her illustrious origin affords her." He asked the viceroy for "a special favor" in allowing his daughter to marry Castro. Calleja approved of the marriage and the couple wed. Soon thereafter, doña Joaquína gave birth to a baby boy, whom she named "José Joaquín" after her father.²⁹⁷

²⁹⁶ Arredondo to Viceroy, February 17, 1816, AGNPI, R239; A copy of Castro's service record can be found in Service Record of José de Castro, May 26, 1818, AGNPI, R188.

²⁹⁷ Haring, *The Spanish Empire in the Americas*, 140-141; Arredondo to Viceroy, February 17, 1816, AGNPI, R239; Lota M. Spell, *Pioneer Printer: Samuel Bangs in Mexico and Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1963), 42, 168. Calleja's reply could not be found, but the couple was wed shortly after the letter was sent, indicating Calleja approved.

CHAPTER 9

THE SIEGE OF SOTO LA MARINA, 1817

We are so far from fearing Arredondo that I hope he comes.

Fray Servando Mier

Francisco Xavier Mina and a small army of American adventurers, Haitian soldiers, and Mexican insurgents landed on the coast of Nuevo Santander in April 1817. Mina and his men had come to the eastern provinces to revitalize the faltering independence movement in New Spain. The revolutionaries planned to do so by recruiting oppressed villagers into their army and marching en masse to Mexico City. The first step in their plan, however, called for construction of a massive fort near the coastal town of Soto la Marina, where ships could resupply the rebels and provide an escape to the Gulf of Mexico should things not go as planned. Because access to the sea was of utmost importance, Mina ordered his men to build the citadel with reinforced walls and placed 300 of his best men to guard the fort. Confident Fort Soto la Marina could handle whatever the Spanish sent against it, Mina set off for the interior.²⁹⁸

Mina's invasion of New Spain was part of a fresh wave of independence movements in Spanish America. Following Ferdinand VII's return to the throne and his dismissal of the liberal

²⁹⁸ For more on Mina's expedition, see William Francis Lewis III, "Xavier Mina and Fray Servando Mier: Romantic Liberals of the Nineteenth Century," *New Mexico Historical Review* 44 (April 1969); William D. Robinson, *Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution: Including a Narrative of the Expedition of General Xavier Mina: with Some Observations on the Practicability of Opening a Commerce between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, Through the Mexican Isthmus in the Province of Oaxaca, and at the Lake of Nicaragua: and on the Future Importance of Such Commerce to the Civilized World, and More Especially to the United States* (Philadelphia: Lydia R. Bailey, printer, 1820); William Francis Lewis, III, "Francisco Xavier Mina: Guerilla Warrior for Romantic Liberalism, 1789-1817" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1967); Arturo Morales, "The Expedition of Francisco Xavier Mina: Its Background and Results," (master's thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1936); and Harris Gaylord Warren, "Xavier Mina's Invasion of Mexico," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 23 (February 1943).

Constitution of 1812, royalist governments in the Americas removed nearly all vestiges of constitutional monarchy. The king dismissed elected offices, sent home representatives from the Americas, arrested liberals, and had his men destroy Enlightenment literature. Peninsulares replaced elected criollos in the colonial government. Although they had operated largely independent of their mother country for the past four years, Spain's colonies would have to give up their autonomy and accept subordination to Ferdinand.²⁹⁹

Having become accustomed to representative government and popular sovereignty, many criollo New World leaders refused to acknowledge the return to absolute monarchy and called for republican, representative governments independent of the Old World. These independence movements were strongest in Spain's more remote, less lucrative colonies where criollos had enjoyed greater autonomy in Ferdinand's absence. From 1814 to 1817, for example, José de San Martín led revolutionary forces against the Spanish army in the Río de la Plata and Chile, eventually expelling Spain from most of the Southern Cone of South America by 1817. Similarly, in Venezuela and New Granada, liberal leader Simón Bolívar began using Ferdinand's restoration of an absolute monarchy as a call to arms for those who wanted separation from Spain. By late 1817, Spain's grip on much of its American empire was tentative.³⁰⁰

Comparable rebellions in New Spain were less successful. When news of Ferdinand's abrogation of the Constitution of 1812 reached the colony and royalists dismissed elected officials—as Arredondo had done with the provincial deputation—criollos grew upset, but few

²⁹⁹ Tulio Halperín Donghi, *The Contemporary History of Latin America*, ed. and trans. John Charles Chasteen (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 48-49, 59-60.

³⁰⁰ Henderson, *The Mexican Wars for Independence*, 144-145; Donghi, *The Contemporary History of Latin America*, 61-66.

took up arms against Spain. The racially charged violence of Hidalgo's revolt was still fresh in the minds of many, and criollos in peninsular-dominant New Spain had not gained as much autonomy as criollos in other colonies. They, therefore, had not lost as much autonomy when Ferdinand returned. The influx of Spanish soldiers from Europe following Napoleon's defeat deterred other would-be criollo insurgents, as did the royalist victory over José María Morelos and the rebels fighting for the Constitution of Apatzingán in November 1815. Without the financial and political support of criollos, the revolution in New Spain remained little more than disorganized bands seeking loot more than social change.³⁰¹

New leadership also contributed to peace in New Spain. On September 16, 1816, Juan Ruiz de Apodaca relieved Calleja as viceroy. Prior to arriving in New Spain, Apodaca had served Spain in the royal navy, as an ambassador to England, and as a captain general of Cuba. In these capacities, Apodaca proved to be amiable, temperate, brave, energetic, elegant of manner, and above all loyal to the Crown. He was also empathetic and much more enlightened than his predecessor. Whereas Calleja and Arredondo demanded allegiance at the end of sword, Apodaca hoped to win the hearts and minds of those in New Spain through kindness and sympathy. Once in office, he promised to address the needs of his constituents. He also relinquished taxes and offered amnesty to any revolutionary who would return to the royal fold. This measured approach should not be mistaken for kindness, as Apodaca spent his first months in office coordinating offenses against insurgent who refused his overtures. This combination of kindness and force proved effective and by 1817, the new viceroy believed that

³⁰¹ Henderson, *The Mexican Wars for Independence*, 145-146, 154-155.

he had defeated the insurgency. If independence were to come to New Spain, it would have to come from the outside.³⁰²

Francisco Xavier Mina hoped to be the one to bring revolution to New Spain. Mina had been born in 1789 in Pamplona, Spain, where he spent his young life studying to enter the priesthood. Napoleon's conquest of Spain interrupted his plans. When French forces entered Mina's hometown early in 1809, the young Spaniard organized a unit of partisans and used hit-and-run tactics to combat the better-armed French army. For the next year, Mina's guerrillas scored one victory after another, but their luck ran out on April 1, 1810, when the enemy ambushed them, captured Mina, and sent the insurgent leader to a French prison. For the next four years, Mina languished in prison where he spent his time reading Enlightenment literature. The books fostered within Mina distaste for his home country's monarchical system and imbued the former guerilla with a love of republican government. They made Mina want to change things.³⁰³

The literature also reminded Mina of a childhood experience. When he was five-years-old, Mina witnessed a well-educated Catholic priest from Monterrey, Nuevo León stand in front of an audience in Spain and rail against the tyranny of the Spanish conquest of the New World. Arguing that Spain had subjugated and mistreated America's Indian population for hundreds of years, the priest, a loquacious aristarch named Fray Servando Teresa de Mier, called on the Spanish government to come to terms with its past and institute social reform in its colonies. Mier's speech earned the priest both the life-long admiration of Mina and a prison sentence for

³⁰² Bancroft, *History of Mexico*, Vol. IV, 648-649, 657-658; Anna, "The Last Viceroys of New Spain and Peru," 54-55, 59-60.

³⁰³ Lewis III, "Xavier Mina and Fray Servando Mier," 121-123; Warren, "Xavier Mina's Invasion of Mexico," 52.

heresy from the Spanish government. Demonstrating a knack for escape that he would use many times in his life, Mier broke out of prison and returned to New Spain. When Miguel Hidalgo called for revolution in 1810, Mier became one of his greatest supporters. Following Hidalgo's execution and the return of royalist control, Mier escaped to London in 1813 and penned *La Historia de la Revolución de Nueva España*, a history of New Spain's revolution. Although Spain denounced Mier's work as subversive, the book nevertheless became widely read throughout the Americas.³⁰⁴

The French released Mina from prison in April 1814 following Napoleon's abdication. As one of his first acts as a free man, Mina traveled to London where he met with the man who had influenced his early life and become a famous revolutionary article. Mier and the former guerilla became fast friends, and they spent the next year discussing Ferdinand's despotism and Spain's future. They also plotted revolution. Mier convinced Mina that New Spain was ripe for overthrow and social upheaval. All the men needed to do, Mier assured, was gather a small army and invade. The people of New Spain would then rise in unison and join their army in overthrowing the oppressive Spanish government. Having seen the power of guerilla warfare, Mina agreed to Mier's plan, and the two set about securing funds, supplies, and soldiers for the planned expedition. After enlisting 200 volunteers in London in the first months of 1815, Mina and Mier departed for the United States to gather more recruits and resources. They arrived in Norfolk, Virginia, in June and spent the summer traveling the East Coast, attending social events and convincing wealthy Americans to invest in their adventure. At some point, the men learned that they were not the only ones hoping to invade New Spain. Indeed, Mina and Mier

³⁰⁴ Lewis, "Xavier Mina and Fray Servando Mier," 119-121, 123. See, José Servando Mier Noriega y Guerra, *Historia De La Revolución De Nueva España* (México, D.F.: Instituto Cultural Helénico, 1986).

discovered that Humbert, Toledo, and Gutiérrez de Lara remained in New Orleans where they continued to harbor a desire to invade Texas in spite of President Madison's warning against filibustering from the United States. Hoping to enlist Humbert, Toledo, and Gutiérrez de Lara into their venture, Mier departed to New Orleans to meet the men.³⁰⁵

Mina, on the other hand, left for Haiti to meet Simón Bolívar, an experienced military leader who had fled to Haiti in 1815 after an unsuccessful attempt to bring independence to his home of Venezuela. Knowing that Bolívar would bring prestige and volunteers to his New Spain venture, Mina asked the Venezuelan commander to join his army, but Bolívar declined. He was in the midst of planning his own invasion of New Granada, the Spanish viceroyalty of which Venezuela was a part. Although the news disappointed Mina, Haitian president Alexandre Petión tempered the rejection by providing supplies and some 140 troops for the New Spain invasion. There was perhaps a more substantial byproduct of Mina's visit to Haiti. He learned that in September 1816, French Corsair Louis-Michel Aury had established a base off the coast of Texas, where he was recruiting volunteers for an invasion of New Spain. Aury was famous in Haiti. He had helped Bolívar fight for independence in South America and had terrorized

³⁰⁵ José Servando Teresa de Mier Noriega y Guerra, *Memoirs of Fray Servando Teresa de Mier*, eds. Susana Rotker and Helena R. Lane (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 190-191; Warren, "Xavier Mina's Invasion of Mexico," 53; Davis, *The Pirates Laffite*, 314-317; Juan Ramón de Andrés Martín, *El Imperio Español Contra Mina: La Reacción Realista Española Ante La Presencia De Javier Mina En Los Estados Unidos Y Las Provincias Internas De Oriente, 1809-1817* (Monterrey: Consejo para la Cultura y las Artes de Nuevo León, 2008), 163-166. Martín's research may also be found in Juan Ramón de Andrés Martín, "La reacción realista ante las conspiraciones insurgentes en las fronteras y costas de Texas (1813-1816). Primeros antecedentes de la invasión de Javier Mina en 1817" *Signos históricos* 18 (July-December 2007): 8-35; Juan Ramón de Andrés Martín, "La reacción realista ante los preparativos insurgentes de Javier Mina en los estados unidos y haití (1816-1817)" *Relaciones XXIX* (Spring 2008): 205-234; and Juan Ramón de Andrés Martín, "Los informes realistas sobre el asentamiento de Javier Mina en Galveston (Texas) durante 1816 y 1817" *Argumentos* 55 (September-December 2007): 157-181. Interestingly, United States General Winfield Scott, who would lead the American invasion of Mexico in the U.S.-Mexico War, attended one of Mina and Mier's meetings in London. See, Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. VI, 141.

Spanish shipping in the Caribbean. Hoping to join forces with this daring corsair, Mina boarded a ship and departed Haiti for Galveston Island.³⁰⁶

Mina's arrival off the coast of Galveston on November 22, 1816 proved bittersweet. From the deck of his vessel, Mina must have been excited as he looked out across what was a thriving community of revolutionaries. Indeed, Galveston contained rows of roughshod homes and stores filled with some 360 would-be insurgents and smugglers of various nationalities. Many had come from New Orleans, including Battle of Medina survivor Henry Perry, future author William Davis Robinson, and young printer Samuel Bangs. Bangs had even brought a printing press to Galveston, from which he had published newspapers, privateering commissions, false passports, and proclamations from the island's rudimentary government. The Galveston base impressed Mina, but, unfortunately, he could only view the community from the deck of his ship, as Aury refused to allow him to dock on the island. Having put so much work into constructing Galveston, Aury feared that should he allow the Spaniard to land, Mina would overthrow his command, as Toledo had done to Gutiérrez de Lara. Only after eight days of Mina assuring he harbored no mutinous intentions, promising his men would live on the opposite side of Galveston, and explaining that an invasion of New Spain would be more successful if they worked together, did Aury allow Mina and his men to land.³⁰⁷

Mina and Aury met periodically over the following months to discuss the planned invasion of New Spain, but the talks went nowhere. They both wanted to command the

³⁰⁶ Lewis, "Xavier Mina and Fray Servando Mier," 124-129; Warren, "Xavier Mina's Invasion of Mexico," 54; For a complete account of Mina's meeting with Bolívar, see William F. Lewis, "Simón Bolívar and Xavier Mina: A Rendezvous in Haiti," *Journal of Inter-American Studies* 11 (July 1969): 458-465.

³⁰⁷ R. Dale Olson, "French Pirates and Privateers in Texas," in *The French in Texas: History, Migration, Culture*, ed. Francois Lagarde (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 61-63; Davis, *The Pirates Laffite*, 316-319. For more on Bangs, see Lota M. Spell, "Samuel Bangs: The First Printer in Texas," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 11 (May 1931), 248-258 and Spell, *Pioneer Printer*.

expedition and could not agree on where the invasion should take place. Mina wanted to take La Bahía and San Antonio before moving deeper into New Spain. Aury believed a sea invasion closer to the interior was more practical. With talks going nowhere, in February 1817, Mina left his men on Galveston and sailed for New Orleans, where he reunited with Mier. Mier informed his friend that he had gathered some recruits, but had failed to convince Toledo, Gutiérrez de Lara, or Humbert to join them. Although this news was disappointing, fortune favored Mier and Mina when they returned to Galveston with their new recruits in March. Perhaps owing to Mier's diplomatic presence, Mina convinced Aury to place his men under his command. In exchange, it seems that Mina agreed to the Frenchman's sea invasion plan. Aury would transport Mina to Soto la Marina, Nuevo Santander, where the insurgent army would build a fort before Mina took the bulk of the army inland toward Mexico City. Aury would remain with his ships off the coast in case the insurgents needed supplies or escape. With these plans in place, the expedition set sail from Galveston in three ships on April 7, 1817, and sailed up the Santander River shortly thereafter. On April 18, Aury dropped off Mina and some 300 men near the village of Soto la Marina and returned to the Gulf of Mexico to protect the mouth of the Santander River.³⁰⁸

Arredondo first learned about "the freebooters... in Galveston Bay" in February 1817, but his sources were bereft of detail. Friendly Indians informed the Spanish that the Galveston Island settlement was sizable, but could not elaborate on its inhabitants' motivations. Officials sent in forged passports confiscated from trespassers in the eastern provinces, but these told

³⁰⁸ Warren, "Xavier Mina's Invasion of Mexico," 55; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 102-104. A small force under Major Sardá was dropped off prior to Mina's landing to scout the region. Sources differ on when Mina made landfall. I deferred to Warren, as he has written most extensively on Mina. See Warren III, "Guerilla Warrior for Romantic Liberalism," 102.

don Joaquín only that there was a printing press on Galveston. Arredondo also received false news that an invasion from the United States was imminent. Don Joaquín may have believed these reports had he not received accurate information from a new royalist spy in New Orleans: José Álvarez Toledo, the leader of the insurgent army at the Battle of Medina. In exchange for a pardon and money, Toledo had abandoned his revolutionary ideals to spy on Humbert, Gutiérrez de Lara, and most recently, Father Mier. When Mier asked Toledo to join Mina's army, Toledo declined and then reported the priest's activities to Luis de Onís. Onís then passed the information to the commandant general and the new viceroy of New Spain, Juan Ruiz de Apodaca.³⁰⁹

Things had not gone well between Apodaca and Arredondo during the new viceroy's first months in office. Whereas Calleja had been very hands-off when dealing with subordinates, Apodaca was a consummate bureaucrat who wanted to control all aspects of New Spain's administration. After taking over as viceroy in September 1816, for example, one of his first acts was to ban kites after a kite-flying child fell off a roof. This micromanagement style filtered over into the new viceroy's dealings with the eastern provinces. Soon after taking office, Apodaca informed don Joaquín that because he held a military post and the rebellion had died down, he could no longer collect taxes without viceregal approval. In addition, the new viceroy dispatched replacements to fill open positions in the commandant general's administration and vacant governorships in Coahuila and Texas. Although Arredondo's allies

³⁰⁹ Martín, *El Imperio Español Contra Mina*, 179-181; Davis, *The Pirates Laffite*, 316-317 (quotation on page 317); Lewis, "Xavier Mina and Fray Servando Mier," 130; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 92; Warren, "Xavier Mina's Invasion of Mexico," 53-54; Margaret Swett Henson, "Henry Perry," *Handbook of Texas Online* <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fpe42> (accessed May 17, 2012). For a complete overview of Toledo's return to the Spanish fold, see Harris G. Warren, *Toledo's Reconciliation with Spain* (New Orleans: Louisiana Historical Society, 1940). For a list of Onís's letters about Mina, see Luis de Onís, "La correspondencia de don Luis de Onís sobre la expedición de Javier Mina," ed. José R. Guzmán *Boletín IX* (1968): 509-543.

had been performing these duties informally, it seems that Apodaca could not countenance unofficial arrangements. The new viceroy also began looking into the various complaints about don Joaquín that Calleja had ignored. This may have been an effort to show the people of the eastern provinces, that their new viceroy rejected the “fire and sword” militaristic rule of Calleja. It may also have been a power play. Having heard of the difficulties Calleja had faced with don Joaquín, Apodaca may have wanted to show the insubordinate commandant general that his office was below the viceroy. Whatever Apodaca’s motivation, don Joaquín disapproved of the new viceroy’s interference. Mina’s invasion, however, prevented him from making these thoughts known.³¹⁰

In March and April 1817, Apodaca informed Arredondo that he regarded the eastern provinces as the “key to the kingdom” and ordered the commandant general to gather 1,000 to 1,500 men, move against Aury and Mina’s forces on Galveston Island, and “relive the glorious day on the River Medina.” Apodaca told Arredondo that he should not accept surrender. He was to take no prisoners. In the type of a dismissive letter Calleja had grown accustomed to receiving, don Joaquín informed the new viceroy that he did not have the ability to attack Galveston. He explained the issues that he had been facing in northeastern New Spain for the past three years: Indian attacks, epidemics, shortages of food, and lack of firearms and horses. The eastern provinces, while relatively peaceful, had become poverty-stricken and the commandant general did not have the facilities to initiate an attack. Furthermore, since the revolutionaries were on an island, a sea assault was necessary, and Arredondo had no navy at

³¹⁰ Bancroft, *History of Mexico*, 649; Enderle, “Contrabando y liberalismo, 172-173; Timothy E. Anna, *The Fall of the Royal Government in Mexico City* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), 181-187.

his command. If the viceroy wanted the commandant general to attack, he would need to send supplies, men, and ships.³¹¹

Don Joaquín knew that he could not wait for the new viceroy's assistance, so on April 10, he called a meeting of prominent locals and officials and asked for their assistance in devising a plan to stop Mina. The commandant general gave this council—made up of the governors of Nuevo León, Nuevo Santander, and Coahuila; church dignitaries; military officials; and the secretary of general commerce—all of his intelligence about Aury's base on Galveston Island. Don Joaquín also informed the assembled men of a rumor that Gutiérrez de Lara was inciting Indians to attack Spanish possessions and a report that some 250 men from the United States were preparing an invasion of Texas. The delegates, therefore, had to figure out a way to combat Indians, prevent an invasion of Texas, and somehow stop Mina with the eastern provinces' limited finances.³¹²

The council deliberated for four days before arriving at an unhelpful and disheartening conclusion. They dismissed the potential invaders in Galveston as a handful of pirates who would be too scared to fight the ruthless and efficient Arredondo. If reports that Mina had an army of American mercenaries and trained Haitian soldiers proved true, however, there was nothing that don Joaquín could do to stop him. In this case, the council argued, the commandant general should take the few men he had at his command, head to a defensible position in Nuevo Santander, and protect Monterrey. He should leave soldiers to defend the northern frontier from Indian raids. The junta concluded that outside of protecting against

³¹¹ Martín, *El Imperio Español Contra Mina*, 188-190 (first quotation on page 188, second quotation on page 189); Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 99-100.

³¹² Martín, *El Imperio Español Contra Mina*, 194-195; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 101; Warren, "Xavier Mina's Invasion of Mexico," 58, 60.

Indian attacks and saving the capital, Arredondo was powerless. The only hope for going on the offensive against Mina, then, would be if the viceroy sent 6,000 to 7,000 reinforcements. The junta did devise a number of ways to tax citizens, but the commandant general would not have time to put their plans into action, as word reached Monterrey that Mina had just landed on the coast of Nuevo Santander.³¹³

When don Joaquín learned of the insurgent landing, Mina's men were in the process of constructing a massive fort on the banks of the Santander River. Once completed, Fort Soto la Marina was to serve as an access point for reinforcements and supplies arriving from the United States. The fort would also provide shelter for a sea escape should things go wrong. To protect the fort from Spanish cannon, Mina had his men erect tall, palisaded walls, which the insurgents reinforced with earth. Cannons, howitzers, and mortar pieces stood atop the fort threatening anyone who dared march against it. The revolutionaries also stocked the inside of the walls with enough ammunition and food to survive a three-month siege. By mid-May, the fort was near completion.³¹⁴

While his men worked on Fort Soto la Marina, Mina built an army. He had Samuel Bangs use his printing press to publish a proclamation espousing the various reasons it made sense for the people of New Spain to break the bonds holding them to their mother country. The edict, which the insurgents distributed in nearby villages, went further, calling on the people of the eastern provinces to join Mina's army and rise against their Spanish oppressors. The propaganda worked and peasants flocked to Mina's banner. Seeing the overwhelming support

³¹³ Martín, *El imperio español contra Mina*, 196; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 101; Warren, "Xavier Mina's Invasion of Mexico," 58, 60-61.

³¹⁴ Warren, "Guerrilla Warrior for Romantic Liberalism," 106.

for revolution, many soldiers and officers deserted the Spanish army and some even joined Mina. By the end of May, the insurgent ranks had risen to some 700 in number. Mina deemed this sufficient to begin his march on Mexico City. Believing that Mina was committing suicide by not waiting to gather more men, Henry Perry and fifty Americans decided to march overland across Texas to return to the United States. Undeterred by the loss, Mina prepared to depart. He stationed 300 men under Major José Sardá to guard Fort Soto la Marina in case of a royalist attack. Mier remained behind as well to coordinate and welcome reinforcements. After telling Mier goodbye, Mina departed for the interior with 400 men on May 24. If everything went according to plan, he hoped to pick up 10,000 men before assaulting Mexico City.³¹⁵

Like Mina, Arredondo spent April and May assembling an army and preparing for battle. He rallied his Veracruz Battalion, recalled militiamen, and, ignoring the advice of the war junta, sent for Extremadura Regiment soldiers in frontier presidios; local officials would have to provide for defense against Indians. Don Joaquín's son in law, Captain José Castro, managed to hire a few more men, and the junta appears to have also supplied some recruits. By May, Arredondo's army grew to 700 men, but they lacked food or beasts of burden, as drought and Indian attacks had depleted the countryside. To obtain these items and pay his men, Arredondo forced prominent merchants and ranchers from Parras, Saltillo, Aguayo, and Altamira to provide loans for his army. Some, such as Miguel Sánchez Navarro of the wealthy and influential Sánchez Navarro family, protested the taxation. Royalist soldiers frequently stole from the Sánchez Navarro's cattle herds, harassed their help, and confiscated their mules and

³¹⁵ Warren, "Guerrilla Warrior for Romantic Liberalism," 103, 106, 109; Warren, "Xavier Mina's Invasion of Mexico," 55, 57-60; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 102-104; Lewis "Xavier Mina and Fray Servando Mier," 131.

firearms. Arredondo seems to have ignored Sánchez Navarro's complaints, as the rancher handed over 3,067 pesos worth of sheep, cattle, and produce. Some citizens—like don Joaquín's omnipresent allies, the Quintero brothers—voluntarily donated cattle and horses to the commandant general.³¹⁶

Although Arredondo would have liked more animals and men, he realized he needed to confront Mina before the revolutionary could gather more recruits. In early May, the commandant general Arredondo departed Monterrey on the Linares road to Soto la Marina. Soon thereafter, the sky opened and rains pounded the Spanish army. Roads turned to mud. Because the Spanish lacked beasts of burden, exhausted soldiers had to drag supplies through fields of sludge. Although small towns along the way relieved this suffering somewhat—offering food, shelter, and livestock to the passing soldiers—what should have been a short journey took most of the month of May. Arredondo used the delay to his advantage by dispatching spies to Soto la Marina to assess the strength and intentions of the insurgent army. They returned and reported that Mina had left a contingent of men to guard a fort on the Santander River and had departed toward the interior. Armed with this information, Arredondo sent a letter ordering Manuel María Torres and his brigade of soldiers in San Luis Potosí to cut off Mina. Benito Armiñán's, who had served under the commandant general in the Battle of Medina, and some men from the Extremadura Regiment would join them. Don Joaquín would

³¹⁶ Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. IV, 338, 352; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 102-103; Martín, *El imperio español contra Mina*, 215; Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820; Pérez, "Predominio realista," 67-68; Harris, *A Mexican Family Empire*, 118-119.

attack Fort Soto la Marina. Unfortunately, the spies were unable to assess the revolutionary strength, with at least one source reporting that Mina commanded over 3,000 men.³¹⁷

On May 27, with battle looming and rain continuing to pour, Arredondo received a letter containing an interesting proposition: Mina wanted the commandant general to defect to the insurgency. The letter criticized the despotic Ferdinand VII and claimed the king had betrayed his countrymen by repealing the Constitution of 1812. The letter, however, went beyond the normal insurgent platitudes and appealed to don Joaquín's sense of patriotism. Mina argued that by joining the insurgents, Arredondo would, in fact, be helping Spain. Spain, after all, had been shackled with the torturous, unrewarding task of caring for her overseas colonies. Don Joaquín would be doing his mother country a favor by breaking these shackles. Hoping to stroke Arredondo's ego and provoke his greed, Mina claimed that if the commandant general helped him bring about independence, he would be a hero not only in New Spain, but also in the United States and throughout Europe. Indeed, Mina even offered to pay for Arredondo's retirement in the United States. Mina closed his letter by stating that it did not really matter if the commandant general joined him or not. The insurgents were going to defeat the Spanish forces. Independence was coming. Arredondo would do himself and the people of the eastern provinces a favor by defecting.³¹⁸

Because no reply to Mina has been found, it is unclear if Arredondo ever considered accepting Mina's offer. If the commandant general's proclamations from May and June 1817

³¹⁷ Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. IV, 352; Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 102-103, 105; Martín, *El imperio español contra Mina*, 224.

³¹⁸ Xavier Mina, "Xavier Mina to Joaquín Arredondo May 27, 1817," in *Francisco Javier Mina en la isla de galveston y soto la marina* ed. José R. Guzmán (México D.F.: México, 1966), 1047-1051; Mier, *Memoirs of Fray Servando Teresa de Mier*, 191; Morales, "The Expedition of Francisco Xavier Mina," 94-100.

are any indication, he did not. In an effort to find more soldiers to combat Mina, don Joaquín sent out a proclamation similar to the one he had issued prior to the Battle of Medina. Claiming that Mina and Mier had forgotten their religion and would bring, “slavery and misery” to New Spain, the edict promised pardons to revolutionaries who surrendered to Spanish forces. Deserters would likewise receive pardons on the condition that they join Arredondo’s army. It seems that some deserters accepted the offer and reinforcements arrived from the frontier, as the Spanish army continued to grow the closer it came to Soto la Marina. In addition, Viceroy Apodaca sent the Battalion of Ferdinand VII to join don Joaquín’s army, as well as additional reinforcements for Benito Armiñán’s pursuit of Mina in the interior. By the beginning of June, don Joaquín commanded 850 cavalymen, 666 infantrymen, and 109 artillerymen—1,625 soldiers in total. He was armed with nineteen cannons. Unfortunately, he had few cannonballs, insufficient food, and many of his men were growing ill.³¹⁹

In addition to sending reinforcements, Viceroy Apocada dispatched a frigate and two schooners to deal with Aury’s fleet at the mouth of the Santander River. Spying the Spanish vessels’ approach, Aury’s men transferred the cargo and personnel of the two slowest ships to the fastest craft. This vessel then skirted the approaching Spanish ships and escaped into the open ocean. Unaware that the corsairs had abandoned the remaining two vessels, the Spanish navy destroyed one of the ships. When sailors boarded the second vessel, they found a cat the ship’s only inhabitant.³²⁰

³¹⁹ Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 352; Jiménez, “Loyalist Officer in New Spain,” 105; “Arredondo Proclamation” in *Francisco Javier Mina en la isla de galveston y soto la marina*, 1043-1044 (quotation on page 1043); Warren, “Xavier Mina’s Invasion of Mexico,” 61; Morales, “The Expedition of Francisco Xavier Mina”.

³²⁰ Warren, “Xavier Mina’s Invasion of Mexico,” 66; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. IV, 340; Davis, *The Pirates Laffite*, 338. The account of the capture and destruction of two

The insurgent navy's defeat left the inhabitants of Fort Soto la Marina without access to the sea. There would be no reinforcements or escape, meaning the fort's 300 or so inhabitants would have to hold out against Arredondo until Mina returned or Aury gathered a fleet capable of dispatching the Spanish navy. If the defenders were worried that these things would not occur, they did not show it. Mier and the fort's commander, Major Sardá, instead, rallied the stronghold's occupants, which included a handful of officers and a few women, one who would come to be known to history only as La Mar. The defenders put all of their effort into finishing construction of the fort. Walls were thrown up, cannons mounted, and guns cleaned. Although a few sections of Fort Soto la Marina remained unfinished, by June, its inhabitants were so confident that it could withstand a Spanish siege that Father Mier boasted, "We are so far from fearing Arredondo that I hope he comes."³²¹

Mier would come to regret his wish. When Arredondo arrived at the nearby village of Soto la Marina on June 10, 1817, he gathered intelligence about the fort and ordered his soldiers to burn much of the town to the ground as punishment for the villagers' failure to resist Mina. The commandant general then dispatched the efficient Antonio Elosúa to scout the surrounding countryside. When he returned, Elosúa explained that the rebel stronghold sat on a flat plain, with one of its sides bordering a ravine and the Santander River. On the other side of the river, Elosúa had found a small hill that would afford a good position from which the

of Aury's ships varies across sources. Some sources say that the Spanish found Aury at the mouth of the Río Grande, not the Santander River. It is unclear if this was a geographical error on the part of the historians or the Spanish. See also Warren, "Guerilla Warrior for Romantic Liberalism," 104-105.

³²¹ Warren, "Xavier Mina's Invasion of Mexico," 65 (quotation); Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 105. Some sources indicate that two women occupied the fort. There is a significant disagreement between sources on the number of defenders in the fort. Loyalists seem to exaggerate and claim that there were more than 300, while surviving defenders put the number at around 100. For more on the subject and more on La Mar, see Lewis, "Francisco Xavier Mina," 135-137, 143.

Spanish artillery could fire into the fort. Arredondo agreed and sent 100 infantrymen, 50 cavalrymen, and 40 artillerymen with 4 cannons to take up position on the hill. They did so without alerting the fort's defenders. The following morning, June 11, don Joaquín and the remainder of the Spanish army marched to Fort Soto la Marina and surrounded it at distance outside of cannon range. The commandant general then signaled the artillerymen on the nearby hill to open fire.³²²

For the next three days, the hilltop cannons fired into the fort's walls, while Spanish soldiers dodged cannon fire to pilfer the insurgents' horses and cattle. Arredondo's men also cut off the stronghold's water supply, leaving the fort's occupants parched in the sweltering summer heat. On more than one occasion, however, La Mar braved gunfire, ran to the Santander River for water, and returned to the safety of the fort's walls. A handful of rebels had similar luck and managed to avoid capture or death long enough to escape the fort, mount their horses, and flee the battlefield. Spanish forces captured twenty-eight less fortunate individuals attempting to sneak out the back of the stronghold. Others surrendered to the Spanish in the hopes of leniency. On June 13, for example, two defectors turned themselves in and claimed that a rocky outcropping would provide the artillery with an even better vantage point from which to fire on Fort Soto la Marina. The new location, however, was susceptible to enemy fire. In spite of the defectors' warnings, don Joaquín personally inspected the outcropping and determined that it would indeed make an excellent spot for cannon.³²³

³²²Arredondo to the Viceroy, May 27, 1820; Warren, "Xavier Mina's Invasion of Mexico," 65; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 105.

³²³ Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 352, Vol. IV, 359-360; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 105-106; Robinson, *Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution*, 171-172; Bancroft, *History of Mexico*, 672.

Knowledge of the new location changed the course of battle. On June 14, Arredondo ordered 400 men to take seven cannons and occupy the outcropping. To avoid detection, the men left after dark while don Joaquín distracted the rebels with cannon fire from a different direction. The ruse worked. The soldiers reached the outcropping undetected and had their artillery set up by daybreak. When the sun rose on June 15, the cannons discharged their payloads. The results were devastating. Cannonballs obliterated one side of the fortification, and fires broke out throughout the fort. With no water to extinguish the blazes, defenders watched as flames crept closer to ammunition piles and support beams, threatening to destroy the fort from the inside. Although the insurgents put out the fires, they knew that if the cannon fire continued, it would not be long before Fort Soto la Marina collapsed. Just as it must have seemed to the revolutionaries that Soto la Marina would be their grave, the Spanish artillery fell silent. The silence, however, did not last, as the sound of hundreds of pounding hoofs and screaming men soon replaced cannon fire.³²⁴

Running low on cannonballs, lacking food stores for an extended siege, and with his men succumbing to disease in the insalubrious coastal environment, Arredondo ordered a direct assault of Fort Soto la Marina. He arranged his army into columns and told his soldiers to rush into the fort at the collapsed wall that his cannons had opened. Don Joaquín then led his army in chants of “Viva el Rey” and joined his men in charging the insurgent stronghold. Replying, “Viva la libertad! Viva Mina!,” Fort Soto la Marina’s defenders opened fire on the oncoming Spanish soldiers with cannons and muskets. Defenseless on the open plain, many of the

³²⁴ Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. IV, 359-360; Jiménez, “Loyalist Officer in New Spain,” 106-107; Mier, *The Memoirs of Fray Servando Teresa de Mier*, 195; Spell, *Pioneer Printer*, 28-29; Robinson, *Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution*, 174.

charging soldiers fell to the rebel gunfire. Those who reached the fort's palisades engaged in firefights and hand-to-hand combat with defenders. Other Spanish soldiers turned and fled. After a cannonball came dangerously close to ripping off his leg, don Joaquín fell back and called for his men to retreat and reform their lines. Although this first charge was unsuccessful, Arredondo ordered two additional assaults. These too failed and met with heavy losses. Realizing that he could not take the fort without a significant loss of life and hoping the fort's commander was unaware of his lack of ammunition and food, Arredondo sent out a flag of truce and asked the besieged insurgents for their unconditional surrender.³²⁵

The surviving rebels, including Major Sardá and Mier, replied that they would rather blow up the fort with themselves inside rather than accept surrender. Knowing that he would be unable to maintain the siege for much longer, don Joaquín offered concessions. According to Arredondo, he promised to spare the insurgents and their families on the condition that the viceroy would then determine their fate. Insurgent survivors remembered the terms of surrender differently. Mier, for example, claimed that Arredondo promised to treat the officers according to their ranks and to respect their private property. According to Mier, all others in the fort, as well as those who had been captured while attempting to escape, could return home at the first opportunity. Mier's understanding of the terms of surrender was likely more accurate than Arredondo's, otherwise Sardá would not have accepted them. At it happened, Sardá not only agreed to don Joaquín's terms of surrender but saw no reason for written documentation with the stipulations. Sardá believed the commandant general to be a man of his word. With the conditions agreed upon, Sardá, Padre Mier, and a few dozen remaining

³²⁵ Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. IV, 359-360.

survivors came out of the fort on the night of June 15 and surrendered their arms to waiting Spanish officials. Surprised that so few had defended against his repeated assaults, a surprised Arredondo purportedly asked, "Are these the whole garrison? Is it possible?"³²⁶

Sardá and Mier soon discovered that Arredondo did not intend to respect the terms of surrender. After confiscating firearms, Spanish soldiers stripped the captives of their clothes, locked the naked prisoners in chains, and forced them into close confinement for the night. The following day, Spanish priests visited the captives and asked if they were Christians. When asked why the priests wished to know, they explained that because the prisoners were about to be executed they felt it necessary to offer baptism to disbelievers. The news caused the captives to wail and curse Arredondo for violating his word. Soon thereafter, soldiers selected eight prisoners, paraded them into what remained of Soto la Marina's public square, and executed them by firing squad. The following morning another eight men met this same fate. Surviving prisoners worked under heavy guard in the hot sun to bury the dead and destroy what remained of the fort.³²⁷

Don Joaquín had his soldiers place many of the surviving captives in irons to be marched to the Castle of San Juan de Ulúa prison in Veracruz. Deprived of food and water, many

³²⁶ Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 107; Warren, "Xavier Mina's Invasion of Mexico," 66; Robinson, *Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution*, 175-176 (quotation); Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. IV, 362-363. For Mier's recollection of events see, Mier, *Memoirs of Mier*, 195-196. The number of prisoners who surrendered to Arredondo is inconsistent in these sources.

³²⁷ Samuel Bangs, "Mr. Bang's Narrative Continued," *North Star*, February 10, 1824; Samuel Bangs, "Mr. Bang's Narrative Concluded," *North Star*, February 17, 1824; Mier, *Memoirs of Mier*, 196; Morales, "The Expedition of Francisco Xavier Mina," 118-119; Robinson, *Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution*, 170, 175-183; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. IV, 359-360. Sources differ greatly as to what happened to the prisoners after they surrendered. It is unclear whether Arredondo was betraying his word to keep those who surrendered safe, as sources differ on the number of people executed. Bangs indicates that Arredondo chose prisoners at random for execution. Robinson says that the twenty-eight men who had been caught attempting to escape before the surrender were the ones that were executed, as they were not a part of Sardá's agreement. Bustamante indicates that Arredondo waited for three days before mistreating his prisoners.

prisoners succumbed to heat exhaustion and dehydration. Others survived but “begged to be shot or bayoneted.” The prisoners who reached the Castle of San Juan de Ulúa faced unspeakable tortures. One man, for example, had to endure leg irons so tight that they shredded his skin and revealed bones. Arredondo dispatched other detainees to Tampico to be shipped to prisons in Spain. Officials forced the female La Mar to work in a hospital. Although she escaped, royalists recaptured her when she tried to reunite with Mina. Troops harassed another female survivor and placed her in servitude to a prominent Spanish family. Arredondo segregated a number of American prisoners and designated them for slavery in Monterrey.³²⁸

Don Joaquín singled out Father Mier for special treatment. Immediately after the surrender of Soto la Marina, the commandant general’s guards rifled through Mier’s baggage and stole what the father claimed to be thousands of pesos worth of property. While looting, the soldiers discovered a copy of Mier’s *História de la revolución de Nuevas España* and reported their findings to don Joaquín. Arredondo used the pretext of possessing banned material to “cloak the shamelessness of... having broken his word of honor” and incarcerate Mier. Claiming that Mier was not a member of the priesthood because the Church had excommunicated him, Spanish Chaplains stripped the imprisoned father of his vestments. When Mier protested, Arredondo argued that the terms of surrender did not apply to the priest because he had surrendered only under duress. The commandant general then had Mier locked in irons, mounted on a mule, and sent to Mexico City to face the Inquisition. As the father rode,

³²⁸ Mier, *Memoirs of Mier*, 196; Morales, “The Expedition of Francisco Xavier Mina,” 118-119; Robinson, *Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution*, 170, 175-183 (quotation on page 179). There are different accounts of what happened to the female occupant of the fort. See, for example, Lewis, “Francisco Xavier Mina,” 136-137 and Lewis, “Guerilla Warrior for Romantic Liberalism,” 135-137.

he must have prayed that he would arrive in Mexico City to find that the capital of New Spain had fallen to his friend Mina.³²⁹

Shortly after destroying Soto la Marina, Arredondo split up his forces and dispatched them to pursue Mina's possible routes into the interior. He sent the Battalion of Ferdinand VII reinforcements to San Luis Potosí. Don Joaquín and his Veracruz Battalion headed for Monterrey in case the insurgent headed in that direction. They dragged the shackled American prisoners behind them. The return trip took the triumphant Spaniards through the town of Santander, where local villagers serenaded the victorious army with clanging church bells and chants of "Viva el Rey!" A similar scene met Arredondo when he passed through Linares. The situation differed only in that inquisitive locals poked and prodded the American prisoners. When one detainee questioned the motivation behind this treatment, a local responded that they were curious because the village priest had said Americans "were men in the shape of the Devil, with a large red eye and mouth and that [they] subsisted on human flesh."³³⁰

Shortly after leaving Linares, Arredondo and the American prisoners arrived in Monterrey. Don Joaquín employed some captives as skilled laborers, but he put most to work repairing the city's streets. After months of this labor, it seems that the commandant general had most of these men executed. A travel narrative from the late nineteenth-century may explain how this execution came about. According to legend, a group of American prisoners were promised their freedom if they could build a stone bridge over the Ojo de Agua in a set amount of time. Although they lacked modern tools and had to carry heavy stones from distant

³²⁹ Mier, *Memoirs of Mier*, 196-199, 218-219 (quotation on page 198); Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. IV, 359-360.

³³⁰ González, *Colección de noticias*, 346; Bangs, "Mr. Bang's Narrative Concluded" (quotation).

mountains, the Americans worked day and night until their hands bled, completing the bridge with an hour to go before the designated cut off. That night the men collapsed from exhaustion and exhalation brought on by the knowledge that they had earned their freedom. The next morning, soldiers roused the men from their slumber, shackled their feet, and marched the prisoners to the just-constructed bridge. Without warning, the soldiers pulled out their weapons and executed the prisoners, letting their bodies fall into the spring. Monterrey's citizens would later construct a statue of the Virgin de Guadalupe to honor these men and it was said that any sick person who slept at the foot of this statue would either die or be cured by morning. Catholics still made the sign of the cross before traversing the bridge at the end of the nineteenth century. Although it remains unclear if these prisoners came from Soto la Marina, an American passing through Monterrey remarked that the city's streets had been "cemented with their blood."³³¹

At least one American prisoner survived Arredondo's purge and consequently, the printed word came to the Eastern Internal Provinces. Although Gutiérrez de Lara had brought a printing press when he invaded Texas in 1813, Spanish forces destroyed the machine following the Battle of Medina. American Samuel Bangs brought a second printer to Nuevo Santander when he invaded Nuevo Santander with Mina in 1817, which fell into Arredondo's hands

³³¹ Mier, *Memoirs of Mier*, 196; Morales, "The Expedition of Francisco Xavier Mina," 118-119; "Article from *Matamoros Reveille*," reprinted in *Minn's American Government*, August 1, 1846 (quotation); Robinson, *Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution*, 170, 177-183. Robinson does not mention if Arredondo brought any prisoners to Monterrey, but Bangs indicated that other Americans besides himself was brought to this place. The travel narrative of Monterrey is from an 1884 issue of the magazine *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly*. The author could not specify a date as to the bridge's construction, and it is possible that the story of the bridge is referring to prisoners captured from Henry Perry's band in Texas, the Mier Expedition, the Mexican invasions of Texas, the Santa Fe expedition, or some other conflict. I concluded that the prisoners refer to those captured at Soto la Marina or Henry Perry's men because they worked on the streets for months before being executed, locals were sympathetic to their plight, and the manner of execution is consistent with Arredondo's methods. See Fannie B. Ward, "Monterey: The Metropolis of Northern Mexico," in *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* 17 (March 1884): 263-264.

following his victory at Soto la Marina. Ignoring Viceroy Vengas's orders to send the press to Mexico City, the commandant general brought the machine to Monterrey and offered Bangs a stipend of eighteen pesos to print government decrees, news, and Arredondo's proclamations. Occasionally, don Joaquín had Bangs publish notices for private events, such as weddings and funerals. Although he was still technically a prisoner, Bangs could travel throughout Monterrey as long as he was available when something needed to be printed. The American took advantage of the situation, joining the local church and making friends within Monterrey's community.³³²

Bangs was luckier than his former leader, Xavier Mina. While Arredondo laid siege to Fort Soto la Marina, Mina advanced toward Mexico City. Indeed, the same day the defenders of Soto la Marina surrendered, Mina defeated a 2,000 man Spanish army under Colonel Benito Armiñán, whom had served with Arredondo at the Battle of Medina. The men don Joaquín dispatched to cut off the insurgents had been unable to do so and Mina continued to notch victories over royalists throughout June and July. Recruits constantly flocked to his army. Everything was going according to plan until August 7, when Pascual Liñán and 3,500 royalist troops stormed Mina's temporary hideout. Mina and some of his men managed to sneak out of the besieged fort on August 8, and four days later, they assaulted Liñán's army from the rear. When this failed to break the Spanish army, Mina and some of his trusted officers fled. They evaded capture until late October, when royalist forces tracked the beleaguered revolutionary to a hacienda near Guanajuato. Far outnumbered, Mina surrendered. He was then brought

³³² Spell, *Pioneer Printer*, 32-47.

before Liñán, who ordered the insurgent's execution. On November 11, 1817, a firing squad ended Mina's dream of an independent New Spain.³³³

Although Arredondo had not been among those who captured Mina, he believed that his victory at Soto la Marina had been instrumental in the insurgent's defeat. He informed Viceroy Apodaca as much before returning to Monterrey. He had managed to seize the fort and kill or capture upwards 300 insurgents. His men had also confiscated sorely needed munitions, food, and artillery, as well as what was likely thousands of pesos of insurgent private property. Most importantly, the capture of Soto la Marina had cut off Mina's escape route, likely contributing to the revolutionary's eventual capture and execution. The commandant general claimed to have done this while only suffering seven dead. Arredondo was almost certainly lying on this last point. Unlike the Battle of Medina, where the Spanish inflicted heavy casualties with little loss of life, the Siege of Fort Soto la Marina had been costly, with many sources placing the number of Spanish dead at 300.³³⁴

Arredondo likely expected a letter of congratulations from Viceroy Apodaca. He did not receive it. Instead, Apodaca's berated the commandant general for his slow advance to Soto la Marina, which had allowed Mina to escape. The viceroy also expressed dissatisfaction that don Joaquín's men had not cut off all roads to the interior, allowing Mina to gather recruits and sow discontent. Apodaca was also displeased with Arredondo's biased, self-promoting account of the events at Soto la Marina and demanded a more accurate report. Arredondo's decision to

³³³ David Marley, *Wars of the Americas: A Chronology of Armed Conflict in the New World, 1492 to the Present* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 1998), 619-620. For a more detailed account of Mina's final days, see Lewis, "Francisco Xavier Mina," 137.

³³⁴ Warren, "Xavier Mina's Invasion of Mexico," 65; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 107-109; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. IV, 353, 359-360. The number of Spanish soldiers lost in the assault on Soto la Marina is unclear.

accept surrender and send prisoners to Veracruz also irritated Apodaca. The viceroy saw it as a violation of orders and a way of shifting responsibility. Apodaca's disappointment also stemmed from reports that don Joaquín had ignored and harassed his new appointee to the governorship of Texas, Antonio Martínez.³³⁵

³³⁵ Martín, *El imperio español contra Mina*, 237-238; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 108-109. Antonio Martínez described his need for troops and supplies and Arredondo's failure to requests in a series of letters to the viceroy in Martínez, *Letters from Gov. Antonio Martínez to the Viceroy*, 3-7.

CHAPTER 10

A FALSE PEACE, 1817-1820

Although the Commandant General assures me he is interested in the welfare of this province, I see that measures do not correspond with his interest.

Texas Governor Antonio Martínez

In April 1817, Antonio Martínez traveled north on the royal road to take office as governor of Texas. Viceroy Apodaca had asked him to assume the governorship as a favor. Texas needed a soldier to lead it, and because Martínez had distinguished himself on the battlefields of Europe, Apodaca thought that he would be perfect for the job. Martínez was hesitant to accept the position, having heard that Texas was mired in poverty and dangerous. In spite of these warnings, Martínez accepted Apodaca's offer and set out for Texas in April. He briefly stopped in Monterrey to meet Joaquín de Arredondo, the commandant general of the Eastern Internal Provinces, whom he would be subordinate to in military matters. The meeting seems to have gone poorly. The new governor informed the commandant general that the viceroy had ordered him to organize Texas soldiers into elite fighting units and wanted Arredondo to assist him in these efforts. Upon reading the viceroy's demands, don Joaquín scoffed, "[you] do not have the remotest hope that this will be done." Instead, Arredondo told Martínez he would have to make do with what he had. If he ever encountered trouble, he was to abandon Texas and report to the commandant general. Arredondo may have ended the meeting by speaking ill of Apodaca, who had begun meddling in the affairs of the eastern provinces. Martínez left Monterrey with a bad feeling about things to come.³³⁶

³³⁶ Martínez, *Letters from Gov. Antonio Martínez to the Viceroy*, 3 (quotation).

Things did not go much better for Martínez when he reached San Antonio on May 28. He found that the governor's palace, which was to be his new home, had a massive hole in its roof directly above his bed. Martínez soon discovered that even under these conditions, he was better off than most in Texas. Touring San Antonio, the new governor observed starving citizens eating rats, leather, and "anything that could sustain life" to survive. Royalists had depleted the province of its food stores when they put down an uprising in 1813, and Texas had no livestock, as Indians drove off horses and cattle from San Antonio on a daily basis. Citizens could do nothing to stop the raiders because the commandant general had taken their guns. Soldiers were powerless as well. They had few functional firearms and almost no horses. Most were without shoes and some went about naked because their uniforms had fallen apart. It must have seemed like things could not get any worse, but a week into Martínez's tenure, he received word that fifty Americans under battle-hardened Henry Perry had entered Texas from Nuevo Santander. To make matters worse, rumors floated in San Antonio that 1,700 Americans were on the Louisiana-Texas border preparing to invade Texas.³³⁷

The news disturbed Martínez, but he followed proper protocol and sent messages to Monterrey informing the commandant general of the situation in Texas. Not wanting to abandon Texas a week into his new job, Martínez requested that his superior officer send reinforcements with which to deal with the Americans. He received no reply. Additional messages went unanswered. Frustrated with the commandant general's silence and fearing the Americans would grow in number, Martínez violated the chain of command and appealed

³³⁷ Martínez, *Letters from Gov. Antonio Martínez to the Viceroy*, 3-8; Antonio Martínez, *The Letters of Antonio Martínez, Last Spanish Governor of Texas, 1817-1822*, trans and ed. Virginia H. Taylor (Austin: Texas State Library, 1957), 17-18; Chipman and Joseph, *Spanish Texas*, 254-255 (quotation on page 255).

directly to Viceroy Apodaca for help. He explained the poor state of Texas, criticized don Joaquín's ban on private ownership of firearms, lambasted his conscription of farmers into the militia, and ridiculed his decision to abandon ranches around San Antonio. To Martínez, these decisions were responsible for Indian attacks and Texas's lack of food. Arredondo had left the province unprepared to deal with the American invaders. The new governor even went so far as to comment, that although the commandant general had assured "he is interested in the welfare of this province, I see that measures do not correspond with his interest." He begged the viceroy for reinforcements to deal with Perry and asked him to countermand Arredondo's orders to abandon Texas.³³⁸

On June 11, Martínez received word that the commandant general had left Monterrey a month before to deal with insurgents holed up in a fort near Soto la Marina. Don Joaquín had not bothered to inform the new governor of his departure. With Arredondo gone and Apodaca too distant to provide immediate aid, Martínez had to deal with Perry using the meager resources he had on hand. He rallied 116 locals, but the men had few horses and dysfunctional firearms. Undeterred, the new governor personally led this army out of San Antonio on June 16 and found the enemy three days later. Thankfully for Martínez, Perry's group had not received reinforcements and were themselves lacking in supplies. This allowed Spanish forces to surround the Americans and kill or capture all but four of their number in a brief skirmish. Perry

³³⁸ Martínez, *Letters from Gov. Antonio Martínez to the Viceroy*, 3-10, 20 (quotation on page 20); Martínez, *The Letters of Antonio Martínez*, 6-8, 46-47. Hatcher, *Opening of Texas*, 258. I based my analysis of Arredondo and Martínez's relationship on the letters in Martínez, *Letters from Gov. Antonio Martínez to the Viceroy* and Martínez, *Letters of Antonio Martínez*. When writing to the viceroy, Martínez accused Arredondo of intentionally withholding assistance for Texas, but when writing to the commandant general, he blamed inadequate funding. For a detailed overview of Martínez and Arredondo's relationship, see Fane Downs, "The Administration of Antonio Martínez: Last Spanish Governor of Texas, 1817-1822" (master's thesis, Texas Technical College, 1963).

killed himself before he could be captured. Victorious, Martínez returned to San Antonio and reported what had happened to Viceroy Apodaca.³³⁹

It was shortly thereafter that Arredondo received a series of reprimands from Apodaca. In addition to criticizing his actions at Soto la Marina, Apodaca berated don Joaquín for failing to support Martínez. He demanded that the commandant general assist the governor and sent 15,000 pesos, which Arredondo was to use to help Texas. The viceroy made clear that he would not stand for the rogue commandant general's disobedience as Calleja had done. According to Apodaca, Arredondo was his subordinate and viceroys could replace commandant generals. Indeed, Apodaca informed don Joaquín that he planned to make Brigadier General Gallangos of Zacatecas the new commandant general of the eastern provinces.³⁴⁰

Arredondo's response to Apodaca can be read as either insolent or apologetic. He claimed that the viceroy's accusations hurt his honor and explained that a lack of resources had delayed him in marching on Soto la Marina. It was Calleja's fault that Martínez found Texas in such disrepair. The former viceroy had ignored the great needs of the eastern provinces, leaving Arredondo to gather soldiers and supplies by himself. Once he did this and started marching, rain and lack of horses had slowed his march. As for Mina escaping into the interior? That was the fault of his officers and officers in other provinces, like Liñán and Armiñán. He and his Battalion of Veracruz had been unable to pursue Mina because they had to protect Monterrey. Arredondo explained that he had done his duty.³⁴¹

³³⁹ Martínez, *The Letters of Antonio Martínez*, 8-12.

³⁴⁰ Martín, *El imperio español contra Mina*, 224, 237-238; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 108-109; Enderle, "Contrabando y liberalismo," 173-174.

³⁴¹ Martín, *El imperio español contra Mina*, 224, 237-238; Pérez, "El predominio realista," 71-72; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 108-109. Jiménez read Arredondo's reply as apologetic, while Pérez saw it as sarcastic. Both interpretations are problematic. An apologetic Arredondo is uncharacteristic but helps explain why

Apodaca canceled his order to replace the commandant general. His reasons for doing so are unclear. Arredondo's explanation for the delay in apprehending Mina may have convinced Apodaca. At the time the viceroy wrote his first reprimands, he had little information on Mina and knew little about the eastern provinces. Perhaps he realized that conditions had hampered don Joaquín's efforts, and the commandant general was not to blame for the delay. As Apodaca's actions would later attest, the more likely reason he canceled his order to replace Arredondo was that he did not know if he had the authority to do so. It was still unclear what powers viceroys held over commandant generals, and because Apodaca was a stickler for proper procedure, he dispatched a request to the Ferdinand to rule on the matter. Until the king responded, if Apodaca wanted to be rid of don Joaquín, he would have to find other ways of doing it.³⁴²

Indeed, in 1817, Apodaca launched a campaign to discredit Arredondo and reduce his authority. Although the viceroy informed Governor Martínez that he was subordinate to the commandant general, he began bypassing Monterrey to relay information directly to Martínez and sent orders that contradicted don Joaquín's. Apodaca also told Martínez to keep him abreast of the commandant general's actions. The viceroy started looking into charges that don Joaquín had pilfered from Monterrey's treasury and profited from the contraband trade. Although it is unclear if Apodaca was responsible, somehow, the Council of the Indies and the king in Spain became privy to complaints about Arredondo from 1814. The viceroy even laid plans to form a provincial deputation-like body in Saltillo that could countermand Arredondo's

Apodaca canceled the order to replace don Joaquín. Pérez's interpretation is more fitting of don Joaquín, but it does not explain why Apodaca would cancel his order. I believe that the order was delayed until the king could make a ruling on the matter.

³⁴²Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 108-109. I based my interpretation of Apodaca on the biography presented in Anna, *The Fall of the Royal Government in Mexico City, 181-187*.

orders. Apodaca planted the seeds that he hoped would discredit and neuter the commandant general in 1817, but it would take time for them to germinate.³⁴³

If Arredondo were afraid that Apodaca's efforts would be effective, he did not show it. Indeed, he seems to have learned of the viceroy's plans and encouraged the rivalry. Because he could not directly challenge the viceroy, he took out his wrath on his representative, Governor Martínez. He saw Martínez's appeal to Apodaca as a violation of the chain of command and a challenge to his authority. As such, throughout 1817 and into 1818, don Joaquín treated Martínez like a tattletale pariah. The commandant general would countermand Apodaca's orders to Martínez and go weeks without replying to the governor's requests. When the Texas governor complained and asked for help in Texas, Arredondo purportedly remarked, "Tell your governor to forget about receiving aid from this office and apply to the Honorable Viceroy as he does, ignoring the regular channels." It seems don Joaquín pocketed the money the viceroy had designated for Martínez's use.³⁴⁴

The commandant general also tried to discredit and marginalize Martínez. In November 1817, don Joaquín called a number of prominent officers to his home in Monterrey and asked them to provide personal information about Martínez that could be used to defile the governor's honor and evidence of a crime that could justify removing the governor from office. When no one could produce the requested information, Arredondo ordered Assistant Inspector Manuel Pardo to travel to Texas to spy on Martínez. Pardo was unable to find impeachable offenses upon reaching San Antonio in December, so he instead undermined the governor's

³⁴³ Enderle. "Contrabando y liberalismo," 72, 163, 166-170; Martínez, *Letters from Gov. Antonio Martínez to the Viceroy*," 8-10.

³⁴⁴ Martínez, *Letters from Gov. Antonio Martínez to the Viceroy*," 5, 8-10, 12 (quotation on page 9). Martínez complained about the missing funds until 1821.

authority in front of others and performed many of the governor's duties as Arredondo wanted them done. Unable to answer the commandant general's challenge to his authority directly, Martínez complained to Apodaca, furthering irritating don Joaquín. By the end of 1817, things had gotten so bad, the governor claimed, "if any measure ... seems to have been instigated by me, the Honorable Commandant General will redouble his antagonism and the best service of His Majesty will be retarded and obstructed." Just as the situation threatened to devolve further, deteriorating conditions in Texas and the eastern provinces forced the two men to put aside their rivalry.³⁴⁵

The most prominent threats to the Eastern Internal Provinces following Mina's defeat were raiding nomadic Indians from the Southern Plains. Although the Lipan Apaches, whom Arredondo had dealt with while in Texas, continued to menace Spanish settlers, by 1817 the Comanches had proven themselves the most prolific and hostile raiders. The Comanches were Shoshone-speaking Indians who had forgone agriculture and spent much of their lives on horseback hunting buffalo and raiding for sustenance. This mounted lifestyle allowed the Comanches to develop equestrian skills that surpassed both fellow Indians and Europeans. Using these attributes, by the end of the eighteenth century, the Comanches had subjugated many Indian tribes, grown their population to some 30,000 people, and created a virtual empire on the Southern Plains.³⁴⁶

³⁴⁵ Martínez, *Letters from Gov. Antonio Martínez to the Viceroy*, 5, 8-10, 12, 20-22 (quotation on page 22).

³⁴⁶ The Comanches have been the subject of numerous histories. For the most recent full-length treatment on the tribe see, Pekka Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008). Hämäläinen argued that although the Comanches left behind no permanent structures or monumental architecture, their eighteenth and nineteenth century dominance of the Southern Plains should be considered an empire in the same vein as the Roman Empire or the Mongolian Empire. Whether the reader accepts this argument or not, Hämäläinen's work is well-researched and well-written. For more traditional approaches to

Conflict with Spain accompanied Comanche expansion. For much of the eighteenth century, Comanches met little resistance when they raided Spanish settlements in New Mexico and Texas for European goods and livestock. The Spanish attempted to bring about peace with the Comanches through diplomacy and force, but these policies proved ineffective when used independently. In 1779, however, New Mexican Governor Juan Bautista de Anza launched a campaign into the Southern Plains that killed a number of Comanche leaders. The Spanish followed up this victory by offering annual tribute to the Comanches in exchange for cessation of hostilities. The Comanches accepted these terms, leading to three decades of relative peace with Spain.³⁴⁷

Napoleon's invasion of Iberia in 1808, the outbreak of independence movements in Spanish America, and the United States's takeover of Louisiana would help end this peace. When Spain diverted funds designated for Indian tribute to pay for wars in Europe and frontier soldiers departed to fight rebels in New Spain's interior, Lipan Apaches and other Texas Indians increased raiding Spanish settlements. Most Comanches abstained from doing so. Unscrupulous American traders on the Louisiana border offering firearms, alcohol, and other goods for cattle and horses stolen from Spanish settlements convinced some Comanches to join in the raiding, but Comanche elders disapproved of these actions. They even refused offers to join the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition in 1812. After Arredondo's purge of Texas in 1813 and with conditions deteriorating in San Antonio, however, even the most stalwart Spanish allies

Comanche history, see Thomas W. Kavanagh, *Comanche Political History: An Ethnohistorical Perspective, 1706-1875* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996) and Stanley Noyes, *Los Comanches: The Horse People, 1751-1845* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1993). For a look at Indian relations with the Spanish, Mexican, and American governments in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Smith, *From Dominance to Disappearance*.

³⁴⁷ Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*, 231, 234-235.

among the Comanches began to realize that Spain was longer in a position to stop their raiding. As such, by 1814, Comanche warriors began to plunder frontier communities throughout the eastern provinces.³⁴⁸

Hoping to head off an all out war, in 1814, Arredondo told the governor of Texas to make peace with the Comanches and their Wichita Indian allies. Recognizing that Spain was operating out of a position of weakness, Comanche leaders demanded enormous amounts of tribute before they would agree to peace. It is unclear whether Arredondo could not or would not give in to these demands, but the Comanches refused the peace overture and continued raiding. With the Spanish military stretched thin, the only thing that kept Comanches from devoting most of their warriors to raiding was fear that their Apache enemies would attack their homes while they were on campaign. Unfortunately for the Spanish, in 1816, the Comanches and Lipan Apaches made peace, allowing both tribes and their allies to extend their raiding spheres deep into the eastern provinces. Whereas before, Indians would attack and then retreat to their homes on the Southern Plains, raiders now stayed in the field for extended periods.³⁴⁹

By January 1817, a full-blown invasion of the eastern provinces was underway. In northern Coahuila, Indians descended on isolated settlements at night, stole livestock, and moved on to the next target before poorly outfitted Spanish soldiers could stop them. In 1817, for example, a joint Comanche-Apache force invaded Refugio, killing several settlers and absconding with more than ten thousand horses and mules. Not long after, Arredondo reported

³⁴⁸ Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*, 185; Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America*, 235; Smith, *From Dominance to Disappearance*, 101-102, 106.

³⁴⁹ Smith, *From Dominance to Disappearance*, 101-106. Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*, 186.

that hostile Indians were killing, looting, and driving off livestock with impunity in the area of Lampasas. Indeed, Comanches abducted fifty children from the town in a single raid, and fifty-eight Lampasas residents met their demise at the hands of Indians from 1817 to 1820. Spanish officers estimated that in a single year, Comanches alone “destroyed” some 1,000 families in the Internal Provinces.³⁵⁰

The devastation was worse for those living or traveling outside population centers. Muleteers, especially those who had been stripped of their arms by Spanish soldiers, made easy targets and came under frequent attack. Indians also attacked isolated ranches throughout the eastern provinces. Frequently, ranchers could not defend their property or lead retaliatory raids because soldiers had confiscated their firearms and previous Indian raiders had taken their horses. In one instance, Apaches calmly picked corn and watermelons while the farm’s owner looked on helplessly. In the face of this onslaught, many ranchers abandoned their haciendas and fled to the relative safety of the eastern provinces’ few large cities. With livestock dwindling and legal trade between towns at a halt, the economy of the already cash-strapped eastern provinces crashed. The situation in far-flung Texas was even direr. Within a year of the Lipan-Comanche peace agreement, San Antonio was devoid of almost all livestock. The Indians became so brazen that they attacked an interim governor of Texas as he was traveling between towns even though fifty presidial soldiers guarded him. When Antonio Martínez took office in

³⁵⁰ Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*, 186; Harris, *A Mexican Family Empire*, 52-55; David Bergen Adams, “At the Lion’s Mouth: Aguayo in the Defense of Nuevo Leon, 1686-1841” *Center for Latin American History Review* 9 (Summer 2000): 344; David B. Adams, “Embattled Borderland: Northern Nuevo León and the Indios Bárbaros,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 92 (October 1991): 213. Adams gives the number of people killed in Lampasas as fifty-one in “Aguayo Defense of Nuevo Leon,” but his later publication “Embattled Borderlands” raises the number to fifty-eight. The 1,000 families destroyed in 1818 estimate can be found in Bradley, “Forgotten Filibusters,” 213.

1817, he proclaimed, “not a single day passes without their [Comanches] making some depredation or attack.”³⁵¹

Don Joaquín had been unable to confront the Indian threat until news reached Monterrey that Spanish forces had captured and executed Xavier Mina in November 1817. With soldiers returning to their outposts, Arredondo called a council of war with his most trusted officers to discuss what was to be done about the Indian raids (this may have been the same council he called to spy on Antonio Martínez). Perhaps after discussing Nicolás Arredondo’s success on the Pampas and Governor Anza’s aggressive approach to dealing with the Comanches, the council decided to take the offensive. Instead of continuing to rely on soldiers in frontier outposts for defense, the commandant general would send an army to the Southern Plains to bring war to the Indians. Doing so would make the Comanches and Apaches reluctant to stray far from home out of fear that the Spanish would attack their families while they were away. The plan called for 500 to 600 mounted militiamen and nonessential military personnel to muster in Texas in spring 1818. Arredondo informed Governor Martínez of the arrangement in November 1817, and, in spite of a personal dislike for the commandant general, he agreed that the plan was the only way of “saving the province from the threat of imminent destruction at the hands of the barbarous Indians.”³⁵²

The expedition did not come together as planned. Governor Martínez was only able to muster a few militiamen and don Joaquín was reluctant to reassign men from other areas of

³⁵¹ Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*, 186 (quotation); Harris, *A Mexican Family Empire*, 52-55.

³⁵² Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*, 186-187; Antonio Martínez, *The Letters of Antonio Martínez*, 80-81 (quotation on page 80); Downs, “The Administration of Antonio Martínez,” 40-41; Joaquín de Arredondo to Antonio Martínez, December 12, 1817, BA, R59, F1002. For an in-depth analysis of Arredondo’s Indian policy, as well as a look at the devastation brought on by the Comanches following his time as commandant general, see, Cuauhtémoc Velasco Ávila, “La amenaza comanche en la frontera mexicana, 1800-1841,” *Historia del noreste mexicano* I (November 2003): 7-156.

the eastern provinces, leaving the expedition only 100 men when spring 1818 arrived. Almost none had horses because Lipans had depleted the Spanish herds surrounding San Antonio. When Martínez informed Arredondo of this sorry state of affairs, the commandant general ordered a roundup of the wild mustangs that roamed Texas. The hunt managed only to delay the expedition until June and net horses for fifty men. Perhaps hoping that good leadership could make up for the lack of soldiers and mounts, Arredondo placed former Texas Governor Ignacio Pérez in charge of the expedition. Pérez was a natural choice. He was a Texas native, had experience fighting Indians, and he had served courageously alongside Arredondo at the Battle of Medina. Indeed, don Joaquín described Pérez as, “the most outstanding officer in these provinces.” Until the commandant general and Governor Martínez could gather more men, Pérez was to proceed to the San Marcos, the site of Arredondo’s failed 1814 fort, and wait.³⁵³

Pérez and his undermanned army departed San Antonio on June 8, 1818 and made camp on the San Marcos River, where they dug trenches, built redoubts, and awaited reinforcements. The presence of the Spanish soldiers on the edge of the Southern Plains seems to have done little to deter Indian attacks, as Comanches raided San Antonio throughout June. It remains unclear if Pérez’s army would have been effective had they remained in the field longer or had they received reinforcements as in July 1818, because Arredondo had new orders

³⁵³ Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*, 186-187; Martínez, *Letters of Antonio Martinez*, 80-81; Joaquín de Arredondo to Antonio Martínez, December 12, 1817.

for the men. Fighting Indians would have to wait: some of Napoleon's adherents had landed on Texas's Gulf Coast.³⁵⁴

Once again, Napoleon was indirectly meddling in don Joaquín's affairs. After coalition forces invaded France and defeated Napoleon in 1814, they forced the French leader into exile on the island of Elba in the Mediterranean Sea. Napoleon remained on Elba for less than a year before returning to France, building a 200,000-man army, and marching into Belgium. In one of history's most epic confrontations, British and Prussian forces defeated Napoleon's new army at the Battle of Waterloo. Once again, the French leader accepted exile, this time on Saint Helena Island in the South Atlantic Ocean.³⁵⁵

Many in France held out hope that Napoleon would one day escape Saint Helena and return to power. One such person was Charles Lallemand, a former French general and associate of Napoleon who had fought with France in Spain, participated in the invasion of Russia, and been with Napoleon at Waterloo. Lallemand was so close to Napoleon he had even volunteered to go into exile with the former emperor on Saint Helena. The British, however, refused to allow it and exiled Lallemand to the United States. Because he could not join Napoleon, Lallemand decided to create a New World empire and later rescue Napoleon from exile to lead it. Tales of discord in Texas led Lallemand to believe that the province would be a perfect starting place. Lallemand tried to seek legal permission to settle in Texas, but Spain, suspecting the Frenchman's imperial designs, not only denied the request but placed an arrest

³⁵⁴ Martínez, *Letters of Antonio Martínez*, 141; Martínez, *Letters from Gov. Antonio Martínez to the Viceroy*, 22. Hämäläinen states incorrectly that the Spanish adopted "a wholly defensive stance." They tried offense. It was just ineffective. See, Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*, 186-187.

³⁵⁵ Emilio Ocampo, *The Emperor's Last Campaign: A Napoleonic Empire in America* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2009), xx, 6, 8. For more on Napoleon's ultimate defeat, see Archibald Frank Becke, *Napoleon and Waterloo: The Emperor's Campaign with the Armée du Nord* (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner, & Co., 1936) and Jeremy Black, *The Battle of Waterloo* (New York: Random House, 2010).

warrant for Lallemand. Lallemand refused to give up and traveled to New Orleans to plot illegal colonization, gather supplies, and recruit settlers. French exiles and Americans seeking land in Texas joined Lallemand. By December 1817, the former general had assembled 150 followers, 600 muskets, and 6 cannons.³⁵⁶

Lallemand looked to fellow Frenchmen Jean and Pierre Laffite for help finding a suitable location for a colony. Described as the “most romantic figure in American history,” Jean Laffite had lived an exciting life. He had explored the Caribbean, earned a reputation as a pirate, smuggled goods into the United States, and, like Humbert, had assisted Andrew Jackson’s defense of New Orleans. Laffite remained in New Orleans following the battle and joined Humbert and others plotting an invasion of Texas in 1815. In 1816, however, he betrayed his compatriots and entered Spain’s employ as a spy. In exchange for information about the filibusters and revolutionaries in New Orleans, Spain turned the other way when Laffite, his brother Pierre, and some of their men took over Galveston Island after Aury departed to drop Mina in Nuevo Santander. For the next year, the Laffites would prove to be an excellent source of information. Their presence off the coast of Texas, however, was a diplomatic nightmare, as the pirates used the base to smuggle slaves into the United States. American President James Monroe even threatened to send a navy to dislodge the pirates. Although he abandoned this plan, he put an enormous amount of pressure on Spain to deal with the Laffites.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁶ Ocampo, *The Emperor’s Last Campaign*, 13-17; Rafe Blaufarb, *Bonapartists in the Borderlands: French Exiles and Refugees on the Gulf Coast, 1815-1835* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005), 86; Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. VI, 129-130, 149. It was not only his fellow French encouraging Lallemand to settle in Texas. Spanish Minister Onís, believing the scheming French may help provide a barrier to the Americans, told Lallemand that Texas would benefit from a French colony. Viceroy Apodaca reprimanded Onís for doing this and informed his officers that the French were not allowed to settle anywhere in New Spain.

³⁵⁷ Warren, “Documents Relating to Pierre Laffite Laffite’s Entrance into the Service of Spain,” 78-85; Olson, “French Pirates and Privateers in Texas,” 65, 73 (quotation on page 65); Davis, *The Pirates Laffite*, 350. Jean

Unaware that the Laffites were spies and believing his fellow Frenchmen would support his colonization plans, Lallemand met with Pierre Laffite in New Orleans on February 2, 1818. After informing Pierre of his plans, Lallemand hired one of Laffite's ships for transport and gained permission to use the pirate's Galveston base as a stopover. Just over two weeks later, Lallemand and his colonists set sail on Pierre's ship and arrived on Galveston Island in early March. Jean provided provisions for the new arrivals and told them about a suitable settlement site thirty miles inland on the Trinity River. The French colonists left Galveston after three days on March 12 and arrived at a spot on the Trinity shortly thereafter. Anticipating a Spanish attack, Lallemand had his men build a massive stockade on a bluff overlooking the river. The French mounted cannons on the fortification and built a barracks within its walls. They also constructed twenty-eight homes outside of the fort with loopholes in order to fire on potential attackers. By April, the French colonists had completed their new home, which they designated "Champ d'Asile," or Field of Asylum.³⁵⁸

At the same time they were offering help to Lallemand's colonists, the Laffites were reporting the French to Spanish authorities in New Orleans, who then relayed the information to the viceroy. Only then, did Arredondo receive news of the French. Not only was the commandant general far down the information chain, he also received inaccurate information,

and Pierre Laffite have been the subjects of numerous popular and scholarly histories. For an excellent, well-cited recent popular history of the Laffites, see Davis, *The Pirates Laffite*. For a brief recent overview of the Laffites in the Gulf Coast, see Robert C. Vogel, "Jean Laffite, the Baratarians, and the Historical Geography of Piracy in the Gulf of Mexico," *Gulf Coast Historical Review* 5 (1990): 62-77. Historians have changed the traditional spelling of the Laffites last name from "Lafitte" to "Laffite."

³⁵⁸ Davis, *The Pirates Laffite*, 351-355, 358-359, 366; Blaufarb, *Bonapartists in the Borderlands*, 107; Ocampo, *The Emperor's Last Campaign*, 208; Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. VI, 152-153. First person, albeit sensationalized and partially fictionalized accounts of the founding of Champ d'Asile may be found in Fannie E. Ratchford, Donald T. Joseph, Hartmann, and Millard, *The Story of Champ d'Asile as Told by Two of the Colonists* (Dallas: Book Club of Texas, 1937) and Jean-Just-Etienne Roy, *The Adventures of a French Captain, at Present a Planter in Texas, Formerly a Refugee of Camp Asylum*, trans. Blanche Murphy (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1878).

with Apodaca reporting that Lallemand had 6,000 colonists preparing to join him in Texas.

Although don Joaquín had heard whispers of a potential French invasion for some time, with so many rumors coming from New Orleans, he was not sure what to believe. Therefore, Apodaca's 6,000 colonists figure was plausible. The news must have been devastating to don Joaquín. Only a year before, he had barely managed to scrape enough men and supplies together to seize a fort manned by 300 men. How could he expect to take Champ d'Asile when twenty times that number could be defending it?³⁵⁹

It seems that Arredondo's answer was to attack quickly before more colonists could arrive. On June 18, he ordered Texas Governor Antonio Martínez to redeploy Ignacio Pérez's Indian fighting contingent to the Gulf Coast in order to clear out the French, as well as any Americans who may have settled on the Spanish side of the neutral ground. Indian threats could wait until Pérez dealt with the French. To support Pérez, Arredondo mustered 90 cavalymen and 100 guns and sent them to Texas. When the men arrived on August 13, 1818, however, Governor Martínez complained that the new arrivals were untrained and did not have supplies or horses to use in the campaign. Arredondo then dispatched another 100 soldiers from Nuevo Santander, but they too arrived in poor condition and ill-equipped. Privately, Martínez cursed Arredondo, blamed the commandant general for the lack of men and supplies, and sent a message to Apodaca complaining that Arredondo seemed to be intentionally

³⁵⁹ Ocampo, *The Emperor's Last Campaign*, 208, 214-218; Betje Black Klier, "Champ D' Asile, Texas," in *The French in Texas: History, Migration, Culture*, ed. Francois Lagarde (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 80-81.

sabotaging the expedition. Martínez could not comprehend that don Joaquín was doing what he had done for the past five years: scrapping together resources and hoping for the best.³⁶⁰

Fortunately for both Martínez and don Joaquín, they would not need a well-trained army to march on Champ d'Asile. Within two months of founding the settlement, Lallemand's dream fell apart. The settlers ran out of food and local Indians grew hostile, leading many colonists to flee to Louisiana. The final blow to Champ d'Asile came when word reached the settlement that the Spanish were amassing an army. Determining that Champ d'Asile was not yet ready to withstand an assault, Lallemand ordered Champ d'Asile abandoned. The French would return to Galveston, await more colonists, and reoccupy Champ d'Asile at a later date. On July 24, the last of the French colonists left what was supposed to be a foothold to a new Napoleonic empire.³⁶¹

Shortly after Lallemand's departure, a group of friendly Indians arrived in San Antonio with news that the French had abandoned Champ d'Asile. Per the commandant general's orders, Governor Martínez dispatched the 250 men from the gathered army to confirm the report. If true, the men were to destroy what remained of the settlement, expel any foreigners that may have taken up residence in East Texas, and return to fighting Comanches and Apaches. If the rumors of Champ d'Asile's abandonment proved incorrect, or if Lallemand had returned to the settlement with more colonists, the soldiers were to expel the French from Texas by force. Because Ignacio Pérez had fallen ill, Martínez placed Juan Castañeda in charge of the

³⁶⁰ Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. VI, 158. Martínez, *Letters from Gov. Antonio Martínez to the Viceroy*," 25-29. Blaufarb, *Bonapartists in the Borderlands*, 113-114.

³⁶¹ Davis, *The Pirates Laffite*, 367-368; Blaufarb, *Bonapartists in the Borderlands*, 107, 113-114. See also, Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. VI, 154-155.

expedition. The governor seems to have chosen Castañeda not because he was the best man for the job, but because there was “no other senior captain in this province.”³⁶²

Castañeda and his men left San Antonio on September 16 for what would prove to be a grueling 200-mile trip. Many soldiers fell ill in the humid, late summer Texas weather, leaving the army in no condition to fight when it arrived at Champ d’Asile on October 9. Thankfully for the Spanish, after touring the empty remnants that had once been Champ d’Asile, Castañeda confirmed that the French had indeed abandoned the settlement and ordered his men to burning standing structures to the ground. Soon thereafter, Spanish soldiers captured two illegal Americans settlers and learned from them that Lallemand had retreated to Galveston. Castañeda dispatched Lieutenant Jose Sandoval in a small boat to confirm this news and inform the French that they were to leave Galveston and not return to Texas. Sandoval was to lie about the size of the Spanish army to expedite this process. Under these orders, Sandoval rowed across the short chasm of water separating the mainland from Galveston. When he arrived on the island, he discovered chaos.³⁶³

After abandoning Champ d’Asile, Lallemand and his settlers fell back to Galveston Island, where they hoped the Laffites would allow them to procure supplies and await reinforcements until they could reoccupy their abandoned post. The Laffites saw Lallemand’s predicament as an opportunity and informed Spain that the former general and his colonists were on Galveston. The Laffites likely hoped that the Spanish would capture the French and reward the pirates for their information. Instead, upon receiving word about Lallemand,

³⁶² Martínez, *Letters from Gov. Martínez to the Viceroy*, 25-29; Martínez, *Letters of Antonio Martínez*, 169 (quotation); Blaufarb, *Bonapartists in the Borderlands*, 113.

³⁶³ Martínez, *Letters from Gov. Martínez to the Viceroy*,” 25-29; Blaufarb, *Bonapartists in the Borderlands*, 113-114; Davis, *The Pirates Laffite*, 350, 380-381.

Viceroy Apodaca assembled a navy and ordered it to capture or disperse everyone on Galveston, pirate and exile alike. The Spanish had grown tired of the diplomatic mess that came with sanctioning the Laffites. Although a hurricane on September 13 prevented the Spanish fleet from carrying out its mission, the storm, in effect, did much of the navy's job for them. It washed away Galveston's supplies, fresh water, and all but a few houses. When Sandoval arrived on the island in October, he found that Lallemand, many of his settlers, and some pirates had given up on Galveston and fled to New Orleans. The French who remained were in pathetic shape and begged Sandoval time to garner passage for New Orleans. Sandoval, knowing that Castañeda lacked enough boats to transport the Spanish army to Galveston anyway, agreed to the delay and departed for the mainland. The remaining French settlers stayed true to their word and left Galveston shortly thereafter. The Laffites and some of their men remained, but they would be of little threat or benefit to the Spanish for the near future.³⁶⁴

After Sandoval reported the situation to Castañeda, the officer sent an ultimatum to the residents of Galveston claiming that he would take actions "that may be fatal to you," should they not depart or send representatives to speak with Castañeda personally. Although it does not appear that the French met these demands in the designated time, Castañeda took no action and left the coast. Indeed, running low on supplies and with many of his men seriously ill, Castañeda decided to return to San Antonio instead of carrying out Arredondo's orders to clear East Texas and return to campaigning against Comanches and Apaches. When the

³⁶⁴ Davis, *The Pirates Laffite*, 369, 377-381; Blaufarb, *Bonapartists in the Borderlands*, 113-114; Olson, "French Pirates and Privateers in Texas," 72. Sources disagree on some of the details concerning Galveston, the French settlers, and the Laffites. Davis, for example, said Apodaca wanted his fleet to remove pirate and colonist alike. Blaufarb claimed Apodaca only wanted to remove the colonists. I deferred to Davis because his study includes more primary sources concerning the Laffites.

commandant general later learned of the decision, he grew furious and threatened to bring Castañeda up on charges of disobedience. Fortunately for the young officer, don Joaquín never carried through with his threat.³⁶⁵

Although he no longer had to deal with French exiles, Arredondo still had the same problem he had at the start of 1818: raiding hostile Indians. Hoping to launch a more successful campaign in 1819, don Joaquín instituted a draft in the lower eastern provinces. It seems that the draft was successful, as don Joaquín gathered 500 men by summer 1819. He dispatched these soldiers to San Antonio and placed a recovered Ignacio Pérez at the head of the new army. In command of five times as many men as the previous year's expedition, it seemed that Pérez could finally force the Southern Plains Indians to sue for peace. Just as the expedition was about to commence, however, news arrived in Monterrey that, once again, Americans were amassing on the Louisiana border in preparation to invade Texas.³⁶⁶

The Americans were reprobate adventurers upset by a recent treaty between the United States and Spain. Following multiple illegal invasions of Spanish Florida by Andrew Jackson and the United States Army, Spain came to realize that the United States could and would eventually annex Florida. To make the best of the situation and acquire concessions in return for Florida, Spanish envoy Luís de Onís met with United States Secretary of State John Quincy Adams in Washington, D.C., in February 1819. The two men decided that Spain would sell Florida to the United States and relinquish claims to the Oregon Territory. In exchange, the United States nullified the Neutral Ground Agreement and recognized Spain's claim to Texas. The new border between New Spain and the United States traveled along the Sabine River and

³⁶⁵ Blaufarb, *Bonapartists in the Borderlands*, 113-114.

³⁶⁶ Martínez, *Letters from Gov. Antonio Martínez to the Viceroy*, 36-38.

went north until hitting the Red River, which it then followed west. After a jagged, northwest trajectory, the border leveled out at the 42nd parallel before reaching the Pacific Coast. The two sides agreed to these terms on February 22, 1819. Although it would take two years to ratify the Adams-Onís Treaty, the conditions of the document were made public in February 1819.³⁶⁷

Many in the United States regarded the Adams-Onís Treaty as a betrayal, perhaps none more so than frontier doctor James Long, a veteran of the Battle of New Orleans who had served under Andrew Jackson. Long believed that the Louisiana Purchase included Texas, and he and fellow citizens of Natchez had hoped the United States would one day exert its claim to Texas and allow American citizens to settle on the province's bountiful cotton lands. Although the Adams-Onís Treaty ended hopes of immediate recognition, it provided Long with an idea. Because Jackson's Florida invasions had led Spain to cede the province to the United States, Long concluded that if he invaded Texas with an army, it would have a similar result. Propagating this belief and promising a league of land in Texas, Long gathered some 200 similarly minded individuals in Natchitoches in the summer of 1819.³⁶⁸

On June 21, 1819, Long and his ragtag army marched across the border of Texas, where they found that American squatters had settled in Nacogdoches following the town's abandonment in 1813. Long established camp among the squatters and remained in Nacogdoches for three months gathering recruits and engaging in ego-stroking exercises. He declared Texas to be an independent republic, drew up a constitution, and appointed himself president of this new nation. Although the government had no legitimacy and the Spanish

³⁶⁷ Chipman and Joseph, *Spanish Texas*, 254; Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 108-109, 130-131; Weber, *Spanish Frontier in North America*, 297-298.

³⁶⁸ For perhaps the best scholarly treatment of the Long expedition, see Bradley, "Forgotten Filibusters," 206-222.

remained in charge of most of Texas, volunteers flocked to Long and his army increased to some 300 men by mid-July. Gutiérrez de Lara even traveled to Nacogdoches. Hoping to grow his army further, Long asked Jean Laffite and the few pirates remaining on Galveston Island to join his new nation. To emphasize his need for volunteers, the filibuster claimed in his letter to Lafitte that Arredondo was at that very moment proceeding to Nacogdoches intent on crushing the expedition.³⁶⁹

The contention that Arredondo was marching to Texas was false. In reality, Arredondo had yet to receive news of Long's flaccid invasion when the filibuster sent his letter to Laffite. Spies in New Orleans reported Long's activities to Viceroy Apodaca in July, but the news circumvented don Joaquín. As such, the commandant general was busy preparing for Pérez's expedition to the Southern Plains when Viceroy Apodaca sent word of Long's activities on August 25. According to Apodaca, the situation was grim. Reports from Louisiana indicated that Long's army consisted of thousands of professional soldiers, not the 300 or so foolhardy adventurers that actually made up the outfit. To meet this threat, don Joaquín would need to dispatch an army against Long before he could advance further into New Spain. To assist in the effort, Apodaca sent 20,000 pesos and ordered Governor Martínez and the commandant general of the Western Internal Provinces to cooperate with the war effort. The viceroy began assembling reserves in case don Joaquín failed.³⁷⁰

Arredondo received Apodaca's message in September. Realizing American invaders were more of an immediate threat to the eastern provinces than Indians, the commandant

³⁶⁹ Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. VI, 159-160; Davis, *The Pirates Laffite*, 394-395; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in Spain," 117, 119-120.

³⁷⁰ Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. VI, 160-165; Martínez, "Letters of Antonio Martínez," 264; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 117-119; Davis, *The Pirates Laffite*, 402.

general ordered Pérez's now 550-man army, which had already departed for its Indian campaign, to redeploy to East Texas. The Spanish soldiers were to march on Nacogdoches and expel Long and foreign squatters. Afterward, Pérez was to travel to the former neutral area—which according the Adams-Onís Treaty was now a part of New Spain—and clear out any Americans they encountered. Only once this was done, should Pérez return to campaigning against Plains Indians. Governor Martínez concurred with the commandant general's plan, stating, "Although I know how very useful it may be for these provinces to send out expeditions against their oppressors [Indians], I consider the total extermination of the Americans who are threatening us of first importance."³⁷¹

Although he was in pursuit of Indians when he received his new orders, Pérez suspended the chase and departed with his army for East Texas. Before reaching Nacogdoches, the Spanish came upon and assaulted a small group of American scouts led by James Long's brother David. David did not survive the encounter. On October 20, Pérez arrived in the vicinity of Nacogdoches and sent spies to gather information on Long's force. The spies returned and reported that Long had learned of the Spanish army's approach, abandoned Nacogdoches, and was currently fleeing to the United States. This allowed Pérez and his men to enter Nacogdoches unopposed. After recovering supplies the filibusters had left in their haste, Pérez ordered Nacogdoches burned to the ground and headed east in hopes of catching fleeing Americans. Although unable to locate the adventurers before they crossed into the safety of the United States, Pérez found evidence that numerous American smugglers and other

³⁷¹ Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. VI, 164; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 117-118; Martínez, *Letters from Gov. Antonio Martínez to the Viceroy*, 36-37, 40 (quotation on page 40); Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. VI, 164.

unauthorized settlers had made their home in the neutral ground. After destroying or confiscating their property, the Spanish returned to the area of Nacogdoches, made camp, and dispatched reports of what he had found to Arredondo and Martínez.³⁷²

On November 11, Pérez left Nacogdoches and returned to campaigning against Indians. He had little success. The Spanish traveled to the traditional hunting ground of the Tawakonis, a Waco tribe closely allied with the Comanches, but found the Indians had left the area on a yearly migration. With supplies running low—Arredondo had sent some but they had yet to arrive—Pérez returned to San Antonio on February 2, 1820.³⁷³

Upon receiving Pérez's report on the conditions of East Texas, Arredondo must have realized that he had a problem: countless Americans were entering Spanish territory without authorization. American settlers had even founded a small village known as Pecan Point in northeast Texas. Whereas Viceroy Apodaca, Governor Martínez, and Ignacio Pérez shared the opinion that refortifying and repopulating Nacogdoches would protect the border and stop the contraband trade and the Indian depredations it inspired, Arredondo seems to have disagreed with this assessment and ignored repeated requests from Apodaca to reoccupy Nacogdoches. It is unclear why he did so, as the commandant general had considered reestablishing Nacogdoches in 1814. Perhaps Arredondo believed that any settlers on the border with the United States would come under that nation's sway. That was what had happened with the Gutiérrez-Magee Expedition, after all. Don Joaquín may also have felt that other means of

³⁷² Pérez to Antonio Martínez, September 28, 1819, BA, R63, F386-387; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 119, 122-126; Martínez, *Letters of Antonio Martínez*, 288-289; Davis, *The Pirates Laffite*, 402.

³⁷³ Martínez, *Letters of Antonio Martínez*, 185-186, 220-226, 279-281 (quotation on page 181); Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 124-126; Velasco Ávila, "La amenaza comanche en la frontera mexicana," 100; Harris Gaylord Warren, "Long Expedition" *Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/qyl01> (accessed May 17, 2012).

border security would be more effective than Nacogdoches or he may have ignored Apodaca's orders out of dislike for the viceroy.³⁷⁴

One of Arredondo's plans to protect the borders involved fostering good relations with the Caddos, the most influential and numerous Indians in East Texas and western Louisiana. Sedentary agriculturalists, the Caddos had, for the most part, maintained a mutually beneficial relationship with Spain for the past 100 years. They preserved this peace even with the arrival of Americans in East Texas. When the members of the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition asked the Caddos to join in their fight against Spain, the Indians refused. By staying neutral, the Caddos could court favor from both sides. The Caddos maintained this declared neutrality throughout Arredondo's time in the Eastern Internal Provinces, but events saw many drift farther into the Spanish sphere of influence. From 1810 to 1820, Americans began farming on Caddo lands and hunting from Caddo game herds in ever increasing numbers. So too, did Indians from the eastern United States moving westward to escape American expansion. Of additional concern to Caddo elders, Anglo traders plied Caddos with liquor, leading to rampant alcoholism and destruction of families.³⁷⁵

Arredondo tried courting this discontent. In 1816, in order to curb American contrabanding, he gave the Caddos permission to "seize all types of people without distinction which he may find in the uninhabited country between the Arroyo Hondo & St. Antonio de Béxar & that if they make any resistance he may kill and destroy them as enemies." This license

³⁷⁴ Chipman and Joseph, *Spanish Texas*, 253; Martínez, *Letters of Antonio Martínez*, 288; Hatcher, *Opening of Texas*, 282-283; Jiménez "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 119. For more on unauthorized American settlers in Texas, see Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. VI, 166-167.

³⁷⁵ Juan Antonio Padilla, "Report on the Barbarous Indians of the Province of Texas in 1820," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 23 (July 1919): 47; F. Todd Smith, *The Caddo Indians: Tribes at the Convergence of Empires, 1542-1854* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1995), 101-112.

to kill almost led to an international incident when a copy of the document made it into the hands of the governor of Louisiana. Fearing that Spain was attempting to incite an Indian war, the governor sent a copy of the proclamation to General Andrew Jackson and asked him to prepare an army to march on Texas. Luckily for all involved, it seems that the Caddos never used their newfound authority, and tempers cooled before a potential battle between Jackson and Arredondo could break out. Although reluctant to kill for Spain, the Caddos had no problem spying for the government; they regularly reported activities on Galveston to San Antonio. The Spanish thanked the Indians for the information and by 1820, Caddos treated “Spaniards well, entertaining them in their houses and aiding them in every possible manner.”³⁷⁶

An opportunity to use this friendship for Spain’s benefit came to Arredondo’s attention in November 1820 when representatives of the some 2,000 Caddos living in Louisiana wrote Governor Martínez requesting to settle their people within the confines of Texas. The American invasion of their land and the alcoholism that came with it had grown unbearable. If the Spanish would allow the Caddos to settle in Texas, they could escape these problems. They would then repay Spain’s kindness by helping to fight the Lipans and the Comanches. Martínez forwarded the Caddos’ offer to Arredondo. The proposition intrigued don Joaquín. Not only would the Caddos be an ally against hostile Indians, they could provide a buffer to American expansion. With this in mind, the commandant general offered to host a Caddo delegation to discuss how settlement would take place. The following year, eighty-three Caddos led by Chief Dehahuit traveled to Monterrey, where don Joaquín offered them a large tract of land on the

³⁷⁶ Smith, *The Caddo Indians*, 111-112; Governor of Louisiana to Andrew Jackson, October 25, 1816, *Andrew Jackson Papers* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1961); “Extract of a Letter to a Gentleman in Virginia,” *New York Daily Advertiser*, April 30, 1817; “Extract of a Letter to a Gentleman in Louisiana” *Washington City Weekly Gazette*, April 5, 1817; Padilla, “Report on the Barbarous Indians,” 48 (quotation).

Guadalupe River between Nacogdoches and San Antonio. The Caddos agreed to the deal and left Monterrey to prepare for the move.³⁷⁷

Arredondo also fostered peace with the Tonkawas, a semi-nomadic band from Central Texas whom Spanish authorities considered untrustworthy and uncivilized. Don Joaquín shared this opinion in 1813, as Tonkawas had joined the Gutiérrez-Magee Expedition and were among the tribes who raided Spanish settlements. The Tonkawas did little to improve their reputation in Arredondo's eyes in 1814. That year, the Tonkawas sued for peace and the commandant general approved of a treaty with the tribe. Within months of ratification, however, the Tonkawas returned to raiding Spanish settlements. They continued to do so until 1817, when they asked for peace once again. This time, Arredondo requested to meet with a Tonkawa representative in person before he would approve a peace treaty. The Tonkawas sent Chief Cadena, a notorious drinker and hellraiser whom Governor Martínez called "worse than the entire nation." Cadena lived up to his reputation and caused so much trouble upon reaching Monterrey that he almost derailed the peace process. In spite of this behavior, the commandant general approved of the peace treaty and Cadena returned to Texas. Soon thereafter, the Tonkawa chief began referring to himself as "Arredondo." Whether this was a display of kinship, a way to compare himself to the powerful commandant general, or a joke at don Joaquín's expense remains unclear.³⁷⁸

³⁷⁷ Smith, *The Caddo Indians*, 107-111. It is unclear how events would have unfolded had the Caddos immediately responded to don Joaquín's proposal.

³⁷⁸ Smith, *Dominance to Disappearance*, 107-109; Ralph A. Smith, "The Spanish 'Piece' Policy in West Texas," *The West Texas Historical Association Yearbook* 68 (1992): 7-24; Martínez, *Letters of Antonio Martínez*, 212-214 (quotation on page 214). As an additional term of the treaty, Governor Martínez demanded the Tonkawas prove their sincerity by allowing Spanish inspectors to check for their villages for stolen horses. The inspectors found no horses.

The treaty proved to be mutually beneficial. Although the Tonkawas became a constant presence in San Antonio where they begged for tribute while Cadena got stumbling drunk, they also proved to be valuable allies in fighting Comanches. In May 1817, for example, the Tonkawas led a small Spanish force against a group of Comanches and their allies, killing eight and capturing two Comanche women. The Texas governor sent the two women to Arredondo in Monterrey, but they escaped before reaching their destination. In another instance, a group of Tonkawas killed a Towakani warrior and cut off his ear. The victorious Indians, familiar with an outdated procedure known as the Spanish “piece policy,” brought the severed ear to governor Martínez and asked that it be sent to Arredondo. It is unknown if the Tonkawa gift ever made its way to the commandant general’s desk.³⁷⁹

In spite of Tonkawa and Caddo assistance, Comanches and Apaches continued to raid into the eastern provinces. By 1820, their raiding sphere extended to the outskirts of Monterrey. Although Arredondo worked with Martínez to assemble a 200-man expedition that killed eight Lipans in the summer of 1820, the soldiers lacked supplies for a long campaign. Arredondo ordered a second expedition, but the men spent their time digging for roots to eat instead of fighting with Indians. The commandant general could not afford to devote more resources to the Indian threat without compromising the security and welfare of the other three provinces. By this time, 75 percent of the eastern provinces’ budget went to Texas. He needed the remaining 25 percent to stop insurgents, bandits, and other threats in Nuevo Santander, Nuevo León, and Coahuila. By 1820, even Governor Martínez had come to realize

³⁷⁹ Martínez, *Letters from Gov. Antonio Martínez to the Viceroy*, 20; Smith, *Dominance to Disappearance*, 103, 107-109; Smith, “The Spanish Piece Policy in West Texas,” 7-24; Martínez, *Letters of Antonio Martínez*, 212-214 (quotation on page 214). Other Texas tribes maintained friendly relations with Spain during Arredondo’s time in office. The Coshattas and Bidais, for example, kept Texas Governor Martínez apprised of movements on Galveston, while some Biloxis, Alabamas, and other smaller Indian groups spied on the French at Champ d’Asile.

that Arredondo could do nothing more for Texas. He informed Apodaca, "I am not depending now on the Commandant General, since I am convinced the chief is sufficiently impoverished."³⁸⁰

³⁸⁰ Ramos, *Beyond the Alamo*, 47; Martínez, *Letters from Martínez to the Viceroy*, 46, 48 (quotation on page 46). Mattie Austin Hatcher agreed with this interpretation, but she also believed that Martínez and Arredondo's relationship distracted them from carrying out their duties. She said, "the strained relations existing between Arredondo and Martínez would have prevented any effective cooperation." See Hatcher, *Opening of Texas*, 282-283.

CHAPTER 11

THE COMING OF MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE, 1820-1821

The best means for holding a newly acquired state is to establish colonies in one or two places that are as it were the keys to the country.

Machiavelli

In May 1820, Arredondo received the horrific news that his infant grandson had died. Although the information may not have been surprising—infant mortality were high on New Spain’s frontier—the boy’s death must have hurt don Joaquín. The commandant general lacked a male heir in a patriarchal society, and the boy had been his namesake. Arredondo now had the unfortunate responsibility of planning José Joaquín’s funeral. Perhaps indicative of his love for the child, don Joaquín ordered Samuel Bangs to print invitations to a memorial service at 10:30am on May 30 in the Santa Iglesia Cathedral; one of the few instances where the commandant general employed the printer’s services for a private announcement. There are no records of this solemn affair, but it would not be unreasonable to assume that don Joaquín served as one of the child’s pallbearers.³⁸¹

His grandson’s death capped what had been a difficult few years for Arredondo. Of particular concern to the commandant general was Viceroy Apodaca’s continued efforts to undermine his authority. Indeed, the viceroy had spent the past three years using bureaucratic loopholes and don Joaquín’s inaction to replace Arredondo’s allies in the eastern provinces.

During Calleja’s time as viceroy, Pedro Simón del Campo served as don Joaquín’s secretary and

³⁸¹ Spell, *Pioneer Printer*, 42, 168. For the full text of the funeral notification, see *Pioneer Printer*, 168. There is no study of infant mortality rates in Mexico in the nineteenth century, but infant death rate was likely similar to that of the United States. For infant mortality in the United States in the nineteenth century, see Nancy Schrom Dye and Daniel Blake Smith, “Mother Love and Infant Death, 1750-1920,” *The Journal of American History* 73 (September 1986): 329-353.

first official, while unnamed military personal performed the duties of second official, archivist, and copyist positions. Following Del Campo's retirement in early 1817, all of these offices became vacant on official rolls. Unable to countenance this informal arrangement, on May 30, 1817, a bureaucratically minded Apodaca asked Arredondo to fill the vacant offices. When don Joaquín ignored the request for over a year, Apodaca filled the positions for him, appointing Joaquín Palou y Faulés as Arredondo's first official, José María Genebriera as his second official, and Juan José Pérez as his secretary. Arredondo's failure to seek a replacement for interim governor Ignacio Pérez had led Apodaca to appoint Antonio Martínez. Although Calleja had allowed Arredondo to appoint governors for Nuevo Santander and Nuevo León, this duty belonged to the viceroy. In 1818, Apodaca exercised this authority by replacing don Joaquín as governor of Nuevo Santander with José María Echeagaray. He also appointed Bernardo Villareal to take over governing Nuevo León from the Arredondo-controlled council that had run the province for the past few years.³⁸²

Apodaca also pursued rumors that the commandant general had abused his office. He dredged up charges that in 1814, Arredondo had allowed a contraband trader to sell illicit cigars in exchange for half the profits. It seems this accusation was bogus. Arredondo denied any wrongdoing, and the viceroy could find no proof of the charge. An investigation into allegations that Arredondo had improperly used funds from Monterrey's treasury also fell flat. Although he did not face prosecution, don Joaquín's innocence in this matter is questionable, as officials would later be unable to account for money missing from the treasury. Although Arredondo

³⁸² Benavides, "Loss by Division," 206-210. The viceroy initially appointed Palou as Arredondo's second official before reconsidering and appointing the man to the role of first official. It is also unclear from present sources whether Apodaca appointed a copyist and archivist.

avoided reprimand for these charges, he was not so lucky in September 1817 when the Council of the Indies and King Ferdinand looked into the Monterrey ayuntamiento's complaints from 1814. After reading about the Veracruz Battalion's hostile actions on August 31 and October 9, the king and council determined that don Joaquín had sowed unnecessary discord. Although the reprimand was light—the king ordered Arredondo to adapt to local customs—it showed that Ferdinand had developed an interest in the politics of the eastern provinces and was no longer willing to let don Joaquín do as he pleased.³⁸³

Don Joaquín likely had Apodaca's close relationship with the king to blame for this change in attitude. Ferdinand trusted Apodaca's judgment and kept him apprised of state secrets that he withheld from others. Because of their friendship, the king did not question the viceroy when he claimed responsibility for capturing Xavier Mina and instead bestowed the title Conde de Venadito I on Apodaca for his efforts. It was perhaps on Apodaca's suggestion that the king initiated a series of rulings that would see Arredondo's powers in the eastern provinces diminish. In 1818, for example, the king denied commandant generals real patronato status.³⁸⁴

Additional measures followed soon thereafter. In September 1817, the mayor of San Luís Potosí, who for many years had been viewing Arredondo with suspicion, sent a letter to Viceroy Apodaca recommending that he form a municipal intendancy to counter Arredondo's military hegemony. The mayor suggested that this body have powers similar to the provincial deputation with an elected official serving as its head. Former Saltillo treasurer Manuel Royuela and tax collector Andrew Ybarra both wanted the job. To prevent don Joaquín from using his

³⁸³ Enderle, "Contrabando y liberalismo," 72, 163, 166-167. It is unclear if Apodaca instigated the investigation into the ayuntamiento's complaints from 1814, but given his record, it seems likely. Officials discovered the missing funds after Arredondo left office, meaning there are other possible explanations for its disappearance. Arredondo may have taken from the treasury following Mexican independence.

³⁸⁴ Benson, *The Provincial Deputation in Mexico*, 40; Benavides, "Loss by Division," 207.

Veracruz Battalion to intimidate intendancy members, the body should be located in Saltillo. The viceroy approved of the mayor's plan. Ferdinand did as well and in October 1818, he sent orders to begin its implementation. Fortunately for Arredondo, the two candidates who hoped to head the new body died of natural causes and the project never materialized.³⁸⁵

Unfortunately for don Joaquín, another royal edict determined that the commandant general's office was subordinate to that of the viceroy. On Apodaca's urging, on October 6, 1818 King Ferdinand removed from commandant generals their "faculties and considerations" and ruled that the office was "subject to the vicerealty as any other provincial commandant general." The king dispatched decree across the Atlantic where Apodaca read it and sent it to Arredondo on February 17, 1819. Upon receiving the news, don Joaquín responded with what one historian called "an application of the Spanish bureaucratic axiom, *"obedezco, pero no cumpro"*: "I obey but do not comply." First, he acted as if he did not receive the royal decree and carried on as he had for the past six years. When the ruse wore thin after two months and Apodaca sent additional copies, don Joaquín pretended not to understand portions of the document and in a lengthy letter asked for detailed clarifications of portions of the ruling. The travel time between Monterrey and the eastern provinces bought the commandant general a few additional months of power, but by the end of 1819, he had run out of tricks. Arredondo finally had to recognize the viceroy's authority over him.³⁸⁶

The reduction in authority took away a number of the commandant general's powers, the most prominent being his ability to tax without Mexico City's approval. This left the eastern

³⁸⁵ Benavides, "Loss by Division," 209; Enderle, "Contrabando y liberalismo," 164.

³⁸⁶ Pérez, "Predomino realista," 69-70; Martín, *El imperio español contra Mina*, 237-238; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 108-109; Benavides, "Loss by Division," 209; Phelan, "Authority and Flexibility in the Spanish Imperial Bureaucracy," 59-60.

provinces dependent on stipends from the viceroy to pay soldiers and fund expeditions against Indians. Apodaca only sent one such stipend from January 1820 to June 1820. An obviously upset Arredondo begged Apodaca for money, claiming his soldiers of the eastern provinces were malnourished, under-clothed, improperly armed, and had gone months without pay. The viceroy responded with accusations that the commandant general had poor spending habits and sent nothing. Soon thereafter, he fired Arredondo's military legal councilor Rafael de Llano and claimed that the commandant general had violated the law in appointing him. Unable to tax and with no assistance from Mexico City forthcoming, don Joaquín asked the citizens of the Eastern Internal Provinces to donate supplies and firearms to the military. Still hoping to create a 500-man army to punish Indians, he also asked for volunteers. Few responded to these requests.³⁸⁷

Arredondo would not be dependent on Apodaca for long, as events in Spain reduced the viceroy's authority. Following Ferdinand's dismissal of the Constitution of 1812, many in Spain declared themselves in rebellion against the crown and called for a return to a constitutional monarchy. By 1820, the outcry had become so pronounced that Ferdinand considered fleeing Spain for New Spain. He would not get the chance. In March, revolutionaries and mutinous soldiers surrounded the royal palace and demanded Ferdinand restore the constitution. He did so on March 9, 1820. The constitution abolished the Inquisition, allowed freedom of the press, provided representation for American colonies in a restored Córtes, and limited the king's power. It also quelled rebellion in Spain. The new government hoped it would have a similar effect on revolutions in the Americas, and so Ferdinand ordered Spanish officials in the New

³⁸⁷ Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 132-133; Arredondo's Proclamation in Spell, *Pioneer Printer*, 171; Benavides, "Loss by Division," 207-210.

World to declare loyalty to the constitution and post copies of the document in public places. He also sent an appeal for insurgents in the colonies to lay down their weapons and return to the royalist fold. In the Río de la Plata, Chile, Colombia, and other areas that had maintained their autonomy over the past decade the plea fell on deaf ears.³⁸⁸

The constitution had a divisive effect in New Spain. Although many criollos and liberals welcomed its return, some saw it as too little, too late, and continued to push for a break with Spain. Most conservatives detested the constitution, some refused to post it, and others went so far as to destroy copies of the document. Military leaders felt freedom of the press would encourage revolution, and the clergy did not like provisions in the constitution that limited their power. Viceroy Apodaca faced a similar reduction in his authority, as the constitution made him a “superior chief” and reopened the commandant general-vicey debate that he had worked so hard to win. The constitution also meant Apodaca would have to supervise elections and oversee the restoration of provincial deputations. Although these provisions led the viceroy to dislike the constitution, he followed Ferdinand’s orders and took an oath of allegiance to the new government on May 31, 1820. Although Apodaca dispatched a public decree of support for the constitution, he moved slowly in instituting its measures. Even this slow pace, however, irked some conservatives in New Spain’s government.³⁸⁹

As a staunch royalist, Arredondo had disliked the Constitution of 1812 on its first go round, and time had done nothing to change his opinion. As such, when news of the constitution’s restoration reached Monterrey on May 16, 1820, the commandant general hid

³⁸⁸ Henderson, *The Mexican Wars for Independence*, 161-162. See also, Richard Graham, *Independence in Latin America* (New York: Knopf, 1972).

³⁸⁹ Henderson, *The Mexican Wars for Independence*, 162; Benson, *Provincial Deputation*, 23. For more on military resistance to the constitution, see Margaret L. Woodward, “The Spanish Army and the Loss of America, 1810-1824” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 48 (November 1968): 601-603.

the information from the public. Unfortunately for don Joaquín, Apodaca's decree supporting the constitution arrived in Monterrey on June 12 and spoiled his secret. The next day, Arredondo, city council members, and clergy met at the commandant general's casa grande home and acknowledged that they needed to recognize the change in government. They then proceeded to the Monterrey cathedral where the bishop led them in taking an oath to the constitution. They commemorated the moment by ringing bells, firing an artillery barrage, and singing *Te Deum*, a Catholic hymn sung to denote important events. Arredondo then had Apodaca's announcement and copies of the constitution dispatched throughout the eastern provinces³⁹⁰

The following months must have been humiliating for don Joaquín and liberating for those whom the commandant general had disenfranchised over the past seven years. Per the king's orders, Arredondo had to hold meetings to explain the constitution to citizens. Clergy and schoolteachers needed to do the same with their congregation and students. Perhaps of greater annoyance, the commandant general had to sit by while Monterrey's elites, many of them victims of violence following the constitution's dismissal in 1814, threw elaborate parties celebrating the return to representative government. The festivities illuminated Monterrey for three consecutive nights. At least don Joaquín had company in his embarrassment. At a celebration honoring the constitution, the Battalion of Veracruz, including many of the same men from 1814, had to fire their guns to cries of "La Pepa," the constitution's nickname. The

³⁹⁰ Arredondo to Apodaca, May 16, 1820, OG, R2; Ricki S. Janicek, "The Development of Early Mexican Land Policy: Coahuila and Texas, 1810-1825," (Ph.D. diss. Tulane University, 1985), 58-59; Spell, *Pioneer Printer*, 42, 168; Enderle, "Contrabando y liberalismo," 167.

soldiers also witnessed as Monterrey's citizens replaced the Minerva statue they had worked so hard to destroy with a new, gold lettered monument honoring the constitution.³⁹¹

In addition to humbling the commandant general, the constitution and the royal edicts that followed in its wake limited don Joaquín's power. He could no longer whip someone as punishment or force citizens to wear medals as symbols of their loyalty to the crown. He also had to reinstate officials fired for political reasons and free foreign prisoners and pardon those arrested for contraband trading. Arredondo complied with these instructions, at least in part. For example, he removed travel restriction from convicted contrabander José Antonio Navarro, and on August 1, 1820, ordered the release of Americans imprisoned for assisting revolutionaries. It seems that some men—possibly survivors of Henry Perry's detachment of Mina's army—lived long enough to take advantage of the pardon. However, don Joaquín did not follow through with this edict completely, as he continued to keep printer Samuel Bangs as a prisoner in Monterrey. In this instance, necessity appears to have been more important than a royal order. Someone needed to print copies of the constitution and the king's numerous edicts.³⁹²

The constitution also required that the commandant general restore the provincial deputation and oversee an election of representatives for the Spanish Córtes. To fulfill these duties, Arredondo supervised a meeting of Monterrey's elites on July 6, 1820, which determined that two officials from Coahuila, two from Nuevo León, two from Nuevo Santander,

³⁹¹ Enderle, "Contrabando y liberalismo," 167.

³⁹² Arredondo to Martínez, October 13, 1820, BA, R65, F460; Arredondo Orders Release of Prisoners, *The History of Mexico in the Laredo Archives, 1809-1845*, 14. For a list of the various royal orders see, Arredondo to Martínez, October 9, 1820, BA, R65, F390-435. For an example of Bangs's proclamations, see Arredondo Proclamation, January 16, 1821, Church in Mexico Collection, BLAC. For more on Navarro, see McDonald, *José Antonio Navarro*.

and one from Texas would make up the provincial deputation. There would be an election on October 1, 1820, to fill these offices. Voters would also elect men to regional constitutional juntas, as well as select the Eastern Internal Provinces's two representatives to the restored Spanish Córtes. When the designated day of voting arrived, the commandant general supervised the election. Although don Joaquín disliked some of the men chosen to fill the various positions—some had openly supported the insurgency—he only objected to the selection of Manuel Zambrano to a regional junta because Zambrano was facing criminal charges at the time.³⁹³

Likewise, Arredondo seems to have had few complaints about his constitutionally dictated role as political chief of the new provincial deputation. On November 20, he presided over the first of what would be three months worth of meetings. Per the constitution, deputation members were to assist don Joaquín in collecting taxes and preparing censuses. They fulfilled the latter obligation with little difficulty, as the governors of the four provinces sent in census information and promised quarterly reports of provincial births, deaths, and marriages. Collecting taxes, on the other hand, proved difficult. Indeed, deputation members soon learned what Arredondo had known for a long time: insurrection, drought, and banditry had left the people of the eastern provinces with little to give and many citizens hid their livestock and possessions from tax collectors. Fortunately, the reinstatement of the more-

³⁹³ Enderle, "Contrabando y liberalismo," 167-170; Eugene C. Barker, "The Government of Austin's Colony, 1821-1831," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 21 (January 1918): 224-225; Félix D. Almaráz, Jr. *Governor Antonio Martínez and Mexican Independence in Texas: An Orderly Transition* (San Antonio: Bexar County Historical Commission, 1979), 10; Janicek, "The Development of Early Mexican Land Policy," 62.

liberal provincial deputation prompted a group of businessmen in Saltillo to donate much-needed funds to Monterrey.³⁹⁴

The men of the provincial deputation realized that they could not rely on the kindness of others for long. Because the constitution stipulated that the deputation was to help the commandant general to promote education, industry, and commerce, the council debated ways to improve conditions in the eastern provinces over the long term. Many of their ideas, such as free trade with the United States, were controversial. Others were retreads of those proposed but abandoned by don Joaquín. The provincial deputation, for example, resurrected Arredondo's idea of opening a port downriver from La Bahía from which to conduct trade between Texas and other Spanish colonies. Mexico City supported the plan and allowed the provincial deputation to suspend duties into and out of the port to promote economic and demographic growth.³⁹⁵

In January 1821, Arredondo and the provincial deputation considered another plan to populate Texas. In December 1820, American Moses Austin traveled from Louisiana to San Antonio to ask Governor Antonio Martínez for permission to settle Americans in Texas. Having just driven off James Long a year before, Martínez was wary of the idea. A mutual acquaintance, however, spoke to Austin's character, and Martínez learned that Austin had been

³⁹⁴ Barker, "The Government of Austin's Colony" 224-225; Félix D. Almaráz, *Governor Antonio Martínez and Mexican Independence in Texas: An Orderly Transition* (San Antonio: Bexar County Historical Commission, 1979), 10; Janicek, "The Development of Early Mexican Land Policy," 63; Arredondo to Martínez, December 1, 1820, BA, R65, F947; Arredondo to Martínez, December 1820, BA, R65, F929-930; Martínez to Ambrosio María de Aldasoro, February 6, 1821, BA, R66, F580-581; Valerio-Jiménez, "Neglected Citizens," 272-273. Additional Arredondo proclamations supporting the provincial deputation can be found in Church in Mexico Collection, BLAC. The deputation was supposed to meet for ninety days every year, but the first session may have lasted longer than that.

³⁹⁵ Barker, "The Government of Austin's Colony" 224-225. See also, José A. Hernández, *Mexican American Colonization During the Nineteenth Century: A History of the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

a Spanish citizen when Spain controlled Missouri. When the two men met on December 26, Austin outlined his plan. He wanted to settle 300 industrious American families at the mouth of the Colorado River. Recruits would be Catholics of good character who would follow Spanish laws and customs and help Spain fight Indians. The idea intrigued Martínez, and he sent a positive assessment of Austin's plan to Arredondo in Monterrey.³⁹⁶

It is impossible to know don Joaquín's first thoughts upon reading Martínez's letter in January 1821, but it would not be difficult to imagine that he considered throwing it into the fire. Over the past seven years, Americans had invaded Texas with Gutiérrez de Lara, landed in Nuevo Santander with Mina, engaged in contraband trading, and settled in the eastern provinces without authorization. A year before, James Long had even declared Texas independent of Spain. It was no secret that the commandant general distrusted Americans. However, he also envied the United States's recent economic and industrial growth and wanted similar developments for the eastern provinces. By allowing Austin and his settlers into Texas, Arredondo knew that they could introduce the province to the worldwide cotton economy and bring "an important augmentation, in agriculture, industry, and arts." They could also encourage settlement from within New Spain by fighting Indians and providing tax money for internal improvements.³⁹⁷

Even considering the potential benefits, it is doubtful that Arredondo would have approved Austin's colonization had there not been other plans in the works to settle Texas. As

³⁹⁶ Gregg Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin, Empresario of Texas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 85-86. Cantrell's biography is the standard in the field for Stephen F. Austin. For a more detailed, yet dated biography on Austin, see Eugene C. Barker, *The Life of Stephen F. Austin, Founder of Texas, 1793-1836: A Chapter of the Westward Movement by the Anglo-American People* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1968).

³⁹⁷ Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin*, 85-86; "Translation of the Laws, Orders, and Contracts of Colonization," *Houston Telegraph*, April 11, 1837 (quotation).

don Joaquín must have known, Luís de Onís was working with Spain's ally Switzerland to colonize 10,000 Swiss in Texas. The minister had also taken preliminary steps to recruit Canadian colonists for the province. At the same time, Governor Martínez was working to settle thirty Tlaxcalan families from Coahuila on former mission lands in Texas. These colonization efforts were in addition to Arredondo's own campaign to resettle Caddo Indians from Louisiana in the province, and the provincial deputation's plan to grow Texas's population by opening a port near La Bahía. If Austin's 300 American families proved to be a problem, the thousands of loyal Spaniards, Canadians, Swiss, and friendly Indians these colonization efforts brought to Texas would keep them in check.³⁹⁸

Even though Austin's settlers would be but a small part of a revitalized Texas, Arredondo wanted to ensure that the Americans adhered to a strict set of guidelines. He took Austin's petition to the provincial deputation, where it was agreed that potential colonists would need to be Catholics, provide written documentation attesting to their good character, and take an oath of loyalty to the King and Spanish government before being allowed to enter Texas. With these conditions agreed upon, Arredondo and the deputation approved Austin's plan on January 17, 1821. Governor Martínez learned of the endorsement shortly thereafter and dispatched Erasmo Seguín to Louisiana to inform Austin of the news. Unfortunately, Moses

³⁹⁸ Luis de Onís to Duque de San Fernando, September 19, 1819, ESTADO 42, N48, AGI; Luis de Onís to Pedro Castro, March 1, 1821, ESTADO 42, N48, AGI; Hatcher, *The Opening of Texas*, 271-274; Smith, *The Caddo Indians*, 111; Smith, *From Dominance to Disappearance*, 115. Although I was unable to locate direct correspondence between Onís and Arredondo, it is likely that Viceroy Apodaca kept the Commandant General informed of the various colonization plans.

Austin died before he could carry through with his plan. Seguín, however, met Austin's son Stephen who decided to adopt his father's colonization endeavor.³⁹⁹

An outbreak in revolutionary violence ended most efforts to colonize Texas. Although the reinstatement of the Constitution of 1812 had placated some liberals in New Spain, it had shown others that Spain was weak and incapable of dealing with issues in the Americas. Most criollos supported the Constitution of 1812 but continued to be dissatisfied that peninsulares dominated certain government offices and restricted their power. Indeed, many peninsulares in New Spain were doing their best to slow the implementation of the constitution. For example, royalists in Mexico City limited freedom of the press, correctly believing that certain literature promoted independence. Although this growing resentment pushed many criollos away from Spain, a continued reliance on the Spanish army to suppress Mestizos and Indians prevented them from taking up arms for independence. Fear of race war also discouraged criollos from supporting Vicente Guerrero, the black leader of one of the few revolutionary armies remaining in New Spain. Independence, it seemed, would not take place unless someone could unite New Spain's various classes and races against the Spanish government.⁴⁰⁰

Colonel Agustín de Iturbide was a criollo man of wealth from the province of Valladolid. In the early years of the War for Mexican Independence, Iturbide had served in the royalist army in southern and central New Spain, where he earned a reputation as a merciless and determined soldier. Like Arredondo, he meted out unjust punishments, abused rebel wives

³⁹⁹ Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin*, 86; "Translation of the Laws, Orders, and Contracts of Colonization," *Houston Telegraph*, April 11, 1837. The conditions that Arredondo dictated to the American colonists have been translated and published in a number of secondary sources.

⁴⁰⁰ Henderson, *The Mexican Wars for Independence*, 166-167. For an overview of the final year of the Mexican War for Independence, see also Timothy E. Anna, *The Mexican Empire of Iturbide* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), and Archer, "Insurrection—Reaction—Revolution."

and children, and employed a scorched-earth policy to suppress revolution. These tactics proved effective and in 1820, Viceroy Apodaca placed Iturbide at the head the royalist army in southern New Spain and asked him to suppress Vicente Guerrero's revolt. While pursuing Guerrero, Iturbide came to realize that independence was inevitable and that New Spain "was about to be drenched in blood" unless someone stepped forward to lead the revolution and provide assurances to both criollos and lower classes. Believing that he was the man for this job, In February 1821, Iturbide called for a parlay with Guerrero in the city of Iguala. Guerrero accepted the offer and the two men drew up the twenty-three article outline known today as the Plan de Iguala. The Plan de Iguala declared that the constitutional monarchy of Mexico was independent of Spain and layed out a basic outline for how this new government was to be run. In an effort to unite all in Mexico dissatisfied with Spanish rule, the Plan de Iguala made Roman Catholicism the state religion, eliminated exclusion from government office based on heredity, and promised social equality to all races. Iturbide and Guerrero released the Plan de Iguala on February 24, united their armies, and prepared to march on Mexico City.⁴⁰¹

News of Iturbide's defection reached Monterrey by March 13, 1821, prompting Arredondo to issue the Proclamation to the People of the Four Eastern Interior Provinces. The document dismissed Iturbide's revolution and expressed don Joaquín's confidence that the people of northeastern New Spain would remain loyal. He assured citizens that he had taken precautions to prevent an attack on the eastern provinces, but if for whatever reason, Iturbide were foolish enough to invade, the commandant general would personally lead an army to

⁴⁰¹ Henderson, *The Mexican Wars for Independence*, 163-164, 166, 168-170 (quotation on page 166); William Spence Robertson, *Iturbide of Mexico* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1952), 63-64, 72.

defend his people from the dastardly insurgent. To show his leniency, Arredondo offered amnesty to rebels who turned themselves into royal authorities.⁴⁰²

The commandant general's proclamation was either a ruse or he was unaware of the size of Iturbide's army because on March 16, he wrote Viceroy Apodaca begging for reinforcements. Apodaca responded that he had no soldiers to send and demanded that the commandant general send 1,000 of his own troops to Mexico City. The viceroy also insisted that don Joaquín use harsh measures when dealing with rebels to prevent the insurgency from gaining support. Although Arredondo could not meet Apodaca's request for soldiers, he followed the viceroy's advice when dealing with would-be revolutionaries. After his men discovered some citizens had pledged their support of the Plan de Iguala, Arredondo ordered the offenders publically executed and required Monterrey's schoolchildren watch the deed in order to "educate them in fear and submission."⁴⁰³

In addition to instilling fear, Arredondo tried to suppress revolutionary propaganda and news of Iturbide's success. This was a difficult task. Much as Arredondo had done in preparation to confront Gutiérrez de Lara and Mina, Iturbide launched a propaganda campaign to convince the people of New Spain to support his army. He dispatched pamphlets that explained the virtues of independence and denounced the royalist government in Mexico City. He also promised that any enemy soldier who joined his army would receive financial compensation. Surrendering officers would be treated with respect, and if they joined the insurgent army, they would maintain their rank. If they chose not to fight with the

⁴⁰² Spell, *Samuel Bangs*, 46-47, 172; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 134; Cossío, *Historia de Nuevo León*, 256; Almaráz, *An Orderly Transition*, 12, 22.

⁴⁰³ Robertson, *Iturbide of Mexico*, 86; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 134; Almaráz, *An Orderly Transition*, 12; Janicek, "The Development of Early Mexican Land Policy," 67; Spell, *Samuel Bangs*, 46; Cossío, *Historia de Nuevo León*, IV, 273 (quotation on page 273).

revolutionaries, Iturbide would still grant safe passage to Spain to any who surrendered. In many areas of New Spain, Iturbide's message met with success and citizens and members of the military joined his army in droves. Before long, his army grew to some 25,000 men. Córdoba, San Luis Potosí, Guanajuato, and numerous other cities fell to the insurgents or surrendered without a fight.⁴⁰⁴

To prevent this from happening in the eastern provinces, don Joaquín ignored many of the provisions of the constitution to control the spread of information. He prohibited travel outside of cities without a passport, restricted printing, and forbade the circulation of revolutionary propaganda. The punishment for committing these offenses would be severe. He also spread misinformation claiming royal troops were retaking lost territory and Iturbide's men were deserting him in droves. He also published pro-royalist propaganda calling on the citizens of New Spain to unite against the insurgents.⁴⁰⁵

In spite of his best efforts, throughout April and May, word filtered into Monterrey that towns throughout the eastern provinces were calling revolutionary juntas and declaring their support for the revolution. In April, for example, the commandant general learned that the people of Arredondo's former capital, Aguayo, had sided with Iturbide. Don Joaquín dispatched his stepson and trusted members of his Veracruz Battalion to quell these rebellions, but he did not have enough men to stop them all. He had to maintain an army in Monterrey to prevent revolutionaries from attacking the town. He also had to prevent an internal uprising. In what must have been a shock to the commandant general, at the end of April some of the officers of

⁴⁰⁴ Robertson, *Iturbide of Mexico*, 88-89, 95.

⁴⁰⁵ Arredondo Proclamation, April 28, 1821, Church in Mexico Collection, BLAC. For examples of royalist propaganda and Arredondo's proclamations, see the Church in Mexico Collection BLAC.

his Veracruz Battalion deserted to the insurgency. The distressed Arredondo responded by doubling the amount of guards patrolling Monterrey. He also positioned two pieces of artillery in the door of his house to prevent insurgent attack.⁴⁰⁶

In June, news arrived in Monterrey that the citizens of Saltillo had taken to the streets in favor of the Plan de Iguala and were planning a military coup. The venture had the support of the town's ayuntamiento and elites, with Román de Letona financing the venture. The curate of Saltillo, José Ignacio Sánchez Navarro, had even persuaded local clergy to join in the coup. Saltillo's militia was on board with the plan as well. The insurgents had even established a provincial governing junta with Ignacio Arizpe and José María de Letona leading the council.⁴⁰⁷

Hoping to stop the insurgency before it spread out of Saltillo, Arredondo dispatched orders for Saltillo's treasurer to send all of his currency to Monterrey. Unfortunately for the commandant general, the conspirators within Saltillo had already convinced the treasurer to proclaim for independence, so he refused to comply with don Joaquín's request. In response to this disobedience, Arredondo sent his brother-in-law Nicolás del Moral with a company of grenadiers from the Veracruz Battalion to bring the traitorous treasurer to Monterrey dead or alive. Don Joaquín also dispatched Lieutenant Lemus with some cannons and a company of infantry from the Veracruz Battalion to the Cuesta de los Muertos, a point ten leagues from

⁴⁰⁶ Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," 134; Cossio, *Historia de Nuevo Leon*, 273; Gregorio Pérez to Antonio Martínez, May 3, 1821, BA, R67, F496-497; Martínez to José Angel Navarro, May 9, 1821, BA, R67, F517-547; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 354; Arredondo to Viceroy, April 3, 1821, AGNPI, R251. For more on Arredondo's reaction to revolution, see Arredondo to Viceroy, April 3, 1821, AGNPI, R251.

⁴⁰⁷ José Cuello, "The Economic Impact of the Bourbon Reforms and the Late Colonial Crisis of Empire at the Local Level: The Case of Saltillo, 1777-1817" *The Americas* XLIV (January 1988), 319-321; James Wallace Wilkie; Michael C Meyer; Edna Monzón de Wilkie (eds.), *Contemporary Mexico: Papers of the IV International Congress of Mexican History*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 54.

Saltillo. There Lemus would await word from Moral about the situation in Saltillo and prepare to lay siege to the town should trouble occur.⁴⁰⁸

When Moral arrived in Saltillo on July 1, he found the people of the city crowding the streets in support for independence. Before he could make his way through the throng to arrest the treasurer, town leaders took the Spanish commander aside and convinced him that independence was inevitable. They explained that he would be doing the people of northeastern New Spain a disservice if he attempted to prolong the unavoidable by promoting conflict. Moral accepted this logic and ordered his men to join Saltillo's citizens in supporting the Plan de Iguala. At 11:00 p.m., the soldiers filed into the town's square and began celebrating Mexico's independence. Moral then sent a message to Lieutenant Lemus and his men at the Cuesta de los Muertos informing him of his decision. This prompted Lemus and his men to proclaim for independence and join their fellow soldiers in Saltillo. A few hours later, news of the Veracruz Battalion's defection reached Monterrey. With most of his most trusted officers gone over to the revolution, don Joaquín realized that independence was going to happen, whether he liked it or not.⁴⁰⁹

On July 3, 1821, Arredondo called a council at his casa grande home in Monterrey to determine a course of action. The body—consisting of Monterrey's prominent civil, ecclesiastic, and military authorities—discussed Iturbide's success in central New Spain as well as the events that had transpired in Saltillo two nights before. Even to those in attendance who were

⁴⁰⁸ Robles, "Translation of Monterrey," 181; Robles, *Coahuila y Texas en la Epoca Colonial*, 664-665; Janicek, "The Development of Early Mexican Land Policy," 67; Cossio, *Historia de Nuevo León*, 273; Alamán, *Historia de México*, Vol. V, 238; Pérez, "Predomino realista," 74; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 354.

⁴⁰⁹ Robles, "Translation of Monterrey," 181; Robles, *Coahuila y Texas en la epoca colonial*, 664-665; Janicek, "The Development of Early Mexican Land Policy," 67; Cossio, *Historia de Nuevo León*, 273; Alamán, *Historia de México*, Vol. V, 238.

devoutly loyal to the king, it was obvious that they had little chance of maintaining royalist control of the eastern provinces. The people supported the revolution, it did not appear that reinforcements were coming from Mexico City, and most importantly, they had lost the support of the local army. With these facts, those present at the casa grande convinced Arredondo that it was futile to continue fighting. Monterrey should side with Iturbide and proclaim for independence. Don Joaquín agreed to this course of action, but insisted that he remain commandant general in the new government. Recognizing this condition, the body voted unanimously in favor of recognizing the Plan de Iguala and sent news of their decision to the Saltillo junta. The next day, July 4, 1821, don Joaquín publicly proclaimed Mexico independent of Spain.⁴¹⁰

From his actions on July 3 and 4, it is apparent that Arredondo hoped the transition to an independent Mexico would be peaceful. After the junta arrived at their decision, Arredondo dispatched letters to the governors of the four eastern provinces detailing how they were to make the transition to the new government. Governors were to assemble civil officials and clergy to take a solemn oath to support their new nation. Military officers were to attend the event in full uniform with their swords. At this solemn ceremony, the assembled men—in front of a book of the gospels and crucifix—would promise to observe the Roman Catholic Faith, to keep peace between criollos and Europeans, and to maintain independence of the Mexican

⁴¹⁰ Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, 173-174; Robles, "Translation of Monterrey," 181; Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*, 249; González, *Colección de noticias y documentos para la historia del estado de N. León*, 362.

empire. The governors followed Arredondo's orders dutifully, and by the end of July, all four of the Eastern Internal Provinces had lowered the Spanish flag.⁴¹¹

Shortly after proclaiming for revolution, Arredondo learned that on July 5, members of the Spanish military had overthrown his long-time nemesis, Viceroy Apodaca. Throughout April and May, conservative military leaders had called on Apodaca to abandon the Constitution of 1812, arguing that its freedom of the press provision allowed insurgents to dispense copies of the Plan de Iguala without punishment. Apodaca had been reluctant to do so, fearing Mexico City's constitutionally created ayuntamiento and centrist criollos would defect to Iturbide. As the insurgent army continued to grow, however, Apodaca grew desperate, bowed to military pressure, and repealed freedom of the press on June 5. As predicted, the ayuntamiento withdrew their support for the viceroy and publically denounced the Spanish government. After Apodaca failed to punish these detractors and his continued efforts to suppress Iturbide proved futile, military leaders determined that the viceroy was too weak to defeat the revolution. On July 5, Field Marshal Francisco Novella overthrew Viceroy Apodaca and installed himself as viceroy. Apodaca and his family left Mexico City for Veracruz, where they then sailed to Cuba.⁴¹²

After naming himself viceroy, Novella installed a military-run government and put in place draconian measures to suppress revolution. He prohibited "suspicious meetings" in Mexico City and forced citizens of the city to work long hours in preparation for the inevitable insurgent siege. He called on residents to donate food and horses to his army and spread

⁴¹¹ Casteñeda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, 173-174; Almaráz, *An Orderly Transition*, 16; Wilkie, Meyer, and Monzón de Wikie (eds.), *Contemporary Mexico*, 54

⁴¹² Timothy E. Anna, "Francisco Novella and the Last Stand of the Royal Army in New Spain," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 51 (February 1971): 95-96.

misinformation about the state of the revolution. In spite of his efforts, in August, news arrived that Iturbide was nearing the capital, prompting soldiers to desert Novella and join the insurgent army. Novella remained defiant, however, and refused to surrender. General Juan O'Donojú, sent from Spain to replace the deposed Apodaca, was more of a realist. Upon arriving in Veracruz in August, he realized that he could do nothing to stop Iturbide. As such, on August 24, 1821, O'Donojú met with the rebel leader and signed the Treaty of Cordoba declaring Mexico independent of Spain. Iturbide secured independence by surrounding Mexico City, finally forcing Novella to surrender and depart for Spain.⁴¹³

Arredondo was no longer commandant general when O'Donojú signed the Treaty of Cordoba. Indeed, he retained his post for only a month after supporting independence. During this time, he maintained communication with Iturbide and attempted to get in the new leader's good graces. On July 27, 1821, don Joaquín issued a circular from the revolutionary leader abolishing certain war taxes and reducing the alcabala tax to 6 percent. Arredondo also worked with former insurgents to sign peace treaties between the Indians of Texas and the new Mexican government. Although Iturbide appreciated don Joaquín's efforts, the overtures would not be enough for the members of revolutionary junta in Saltillo. Upon receiving don Joaquín's demand to remain commandant general of the eastern provinces, they balked, refusing to allow the man who had tormented them over the previous years to retain his office. On July 18, the junta met and elected Gaspar López to replace Arredondo as commandant general. Shortly

⁴¹³ Bennassar, *The Spanish Character*, 215; Anna, "The Last Stand of the Royal Army in New Spain," 103, 106, 107, 109.

thereafter López, accompanied by Saltillo militiamen proceeded to Monterrey to depose the commandant general.⁴¹⁴

There are two accounts of what followed. In the first account, promoted by historian Adán Benavides Jr., López arrived in Monterrey on August 3 and met with Arredondo without confrontation or conflict. The two men discussed the issues facing the eastern provinces, and in a formal ceremony, Arredondo renounced his position as commandant general and signed the office over to López. López reciprocated by providing his predecessor with a passport so he could safely travel to the Mexican coast to find passage to Spain. After gathering his possessions and bidding his men farewell, don Joaquín left Monterrey in the company of family members and close associates. He then traveled to Tampico without incident and awaited a boat to take him to Spain. Passports signed by both López and Iturbide support Benavides's account, as does a letter of renunciation signed by Arredondo.⁴¹⁵

There is a second account of Arredondo's final days in the eastern provinces that is much gaudier than Benavides's placid description. According to contemporary newspapers and Mexican historians, don Joaquín's declaration of independence was a ruse meant to buy the commandant general time. He had spent July determining which of his soldiers remained loyal to join these men with those of a still loyal Spanish general in San Luís Potosí. Before this meeting could take place, however, don Joaquín received news that Gaspar López was marching to Monterrey with orders to depose and execute the commandant general. To escape this fate, Arredondo grabbed his daughter, stepson, and a few personal possessions and fled

⁴¹⁴ Spell, "Samuel Bangs," 172-173; Pérez, "Predominio Realista," 75; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 355.

⁴¹⁵ Benavides, "Loss by Division," 210. The version of events in Robles, *La primera imprenta en Coahuila* is similar to Benavides's account. For an unknown reason, Robles changed to the more exciting narrative in his later work, *Coahuila y Texas en la época colonial*.

Monterrey under the cover of night. For the next three months, Arredondo and his family dodged rebel patrols, barely escaping death on four separate occasions. With some luck, the former commandant general and his family reached San Luís Potosí, where they took sanctuary in the Convento del Carmen. Unfortunately for Arredondo's pride, he had to dress like a woman to prevent Iturbide's forces from finding him. After securing safe passage to Tampico, Arredondo and his family grabbed the first ship out of Mexico. Although Benavides version of events is likely the more accurate of the two accounts, this lurid tale may contain some aspect of the truth, as Arredondo is unaccounted for between August and November 1821.⁴¹⁶

Whether under duress or of his own accord, don Joaquín left Monterrey in August 1821. His daughter doña Joaquína, her husband José Castro, two officials, and a few servants accompanied him. The entourage did not include don Joaquín's wife, María Guadalupe del Moral, as the two had separated six years before. In the interim, María lived in Saltillo supported by a stipend from don Joaquín. When Arredondo left Monterrey, however, he failed to inform doña María and left no money for her living expenses. Without her stipend, María soon lost her home, forcing her to beg the Mexican government for a pension. It appears that

⁴¹⁶ Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*, 249; Arredondo to King, April 11, 1822; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 355. Some aspects of this narrative can be explained away as wishful thinking, but not all. It made sense for contemporaries to portray Arredondo's departure from Monterrey as an evil despot receiving his comeuppance, as readers would find this version of events cathartic. Likewise, liberal Mexican historians accepted and perpetuated this narrative out of a personal distaste for don Joaquín. Although these biased sources would seem to discount the credibility of this narrative, it cannot be dismissed outright, as Arredondo's own version of events is similar. In a letter explaining why he proclaimed for independence, he claimed that he had no other choice but to flee Monterrey or lose his life, he lost almost all of his possessions in the flight, and he barely escaped Mexico alive. Don Joaquín's version of events, however, mentions nothing about dressing in womens' clothing. It makes sense for don Joaquín to claim these things. If he had informed the king that he had willingly declared independence and handed over his position in a peaceful ceremony, he would have lost future jobs, pensions, and more importantly honor. However, the amount of time between his departure from Monterrey and his arrival in Tampico seems to indicate that there are untold aspects of this story. Documentary evidence favors the peaceful turnover, but perhaps there is some truth to Arredondo's more exciting version of events.

Arredondo's replacement Gaspar López provided some compensation. Don Joaquín also left his longtime mistress Joséfa González and the couple's illegitimate daughter Carmen González Arredondo in Monterrey. It appears, at least, that Arredondo provided at least modestly for these two women, as he left his casa grande home in the possession of Joséfa.⁴¹⁷

By November, don Joaquín and his entourage were in Tampico, where they sought documentation and transportation for a return to Spain. In a letter to Iturbide, Arredondo asked for a passport to return to Spain "to fulfill his duties to his elderly mother, and to take care of his financial assets." Making good on his promise to allow Spanish officers safe passage out of Mexico, on December 5, Iturbide dispatched a letter and an approved passport. He wished the former commandant general, "a happy and successful departure and arrival," signing off "your very affectionate friend."⁴¹⁸

Almost eleven years earlier, Arredondo had arrived in Tampico ready to take on the world. With only a handful of men, he had stamped out revolution, imposed his will, and become the most powerful man in the Eastern Internal Provinces. Now almost fifty years old, don Joaquín was powerless, tired, and because it seems that don Joaquín contracted an illness while in Tampico, sick. He wanted nothing more than to go home to see his mother. Unable to find transportation directly to Spain, Arredondo and his family took passage on the *Rosita*, which was departing for Cuba. They hoped to find transportation to Spain once there. On

⁴¹⁷ Cossio, *Historia de Nuevo León*, 275; "List of Approved Passports," *Gaceta imperial de México*, Tórn. I. Núm. 41, 336; Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana de 1810*, Vol. I, 355; Medina to Lopez, March 21, 1822, Operaciones Militares Año de 1822, Legajo 241, SDN; García, *Las provincias internas en el siglo XIX*, 132.

⁴¹⁸ Gaspar Lopez to Viceroy, January 24, 1822, Legajo XI/111/3-103, SDN; For a description of Tampico a year after Arredondo's stay, see Joel Roberts Poinsett, *Notes on Mexico, Made in the Autumn of 1822; Accompanied by an Historical Sketch of the Revolution, and Translations of Official Reports on the Present State of that Country* (New York: Praeger, 1969), 205.

December 28, don Joaquín, his daughter, his stepson, and a few servants boarded the *Rosita* and left Tampico. Arredondo would never again return to the Eastern Internal Provinces.⁴¹⁹

⁴¹⁹ Chipman and Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas*, 249; López to Viceroy, January 24, 1822, Legajo XI/111/3-103, SDN.

CHAPTER 12

AFTER ARREDONDO, 1821-1837

After Viceroy O'Donojú signed the Treaty of Cordoba and Spanish forces departed Mexico, the people of the new nation set about forming a government. Although many liberals hoped for a federalist republic modeled after the United States, Agustín de Iturbide's support of a centralist, constitutional monarchy saw the new nation adopt this approach. Iturbide's plan called for a European royal to serve as emperor. Mexican provinces would elect officials to serve in a congressional legislature. The people of Nuevo León, for example, elected Arredondo's former nemesis Fray Servando Mier—who had escaped Spanish custody in 1821 and returned to his childhood home—as their representative. Although regional elections soon filled congress, Mexico was unable to find a royal who wanted to take the Mexican throne. This prompted Iturbide to accept the position and in July 1822, he proclaimed himself Emperor Agustín I of Mexico.⁴²⁰

The new emperor faced a myriad of problems. The war for independence had devastated the Mexican countryside, destroyed roads and crops, and left tens of thousands homeless. It had also done little to reform Mexico's social system. Although the Plan de Iguala granted Indians and Mestizos legal equality, they remained poor and their resentment of white elites persisted. The war for independence had also given local chieftains a large degree of autonomy, and these leaders were reluctant to relinquish power once the war ended. Iturbide had no money to deal with these issues, as departing Spanish forces had cleaned out the treasury and many of Mexico's mines had gone dormant during the turbulence of the last

⁴²⁰ Henderson, *The Mexican Wars for Independence*, 188; Robertson, *Iturbide of Mexico*, 158.

decade. In addition, King Ferdinand refused to recognize the Treaty of Cordoba and Mexico's independence. The Spanish navy blockaded Veracruz, cutting off trade into and out of Mexico. At the same time, the Spanish army sat in Cuba plotting the best way to retake the lost colony. With little money to pay soldiers or a bureaucracy, Iturbide struggled as emperor and Mexico's troubles mounted.⁴²¹

Figures from Arredondo's past would see Iturbide fall from power. In 1822, Fray Mier and other members of congress blamed Iturbide for Mexico's problems, called for a restriction of the emperor's power, and plotted ways to overthrow the sovereign. When Iturbide learned of the conspiracy, he arrested Mier and other elected officials and dissolved congress on October 31, 1822. This prompted another figure from don Joaquín's past, Antonio López de Santa Anna, to declare himself in open rebellion against the emperor. Following his disagreements with Arredondo in 1814, Santa Anna had returned to his home town of Veracruz, where he proclaimed for revolution in 1821 and joined Iturbide in fighting royalists. In May 1822, Iturbide rewarded Santa Anna with the rank of Brigadier General and placed him in command of the Mexican army in Veracruz. Santa Anna had wanted more accolades than Iturbide gave, so he joined other military leaders in declaring rebellion against the emperor. With his military turning against him, Iturbide realized that he would be unable to retain power and abdicated his throne on March 19, 1823. He then went into exile in Italy. In July 1824, however, Iturbide returned to Mexico intent on retaking his throne. Upon landing in Soto la Marina, local military leader Felipe de la Garza, another of Arredondo's former compatriots, took the former emperor into custody. Having served under Arredondo in Nuevo Santander and

⁴²¹ Henderson, *The Mexican Wars for Independence*, 183, 188, 193.

Texas, De la Garza had witnessed the value in rejecting mercy for the sake of efficiency. After a mock trial, on July 19, 1824, De la Garza ordered Iturbide executed by firing squad.⁴²²

The political turmoil of Mexico's early years left local leaders to deal with the eastern provinces' problems. Owing to political disputes, they found this to be difficult. After Gaspar López assumed the commandant general position from Arredondo, he moved the capital of the Eastern Internal Provinces from Monterrey to his home in nearby Saltillo. This greatly upset politicians in Monterrey, and in response, they formed a provincial deputation and ignored many of López's orders. Before long, all of the lower eastern provinces requested their own provincial deputations, with don Joaquín's former nemesis José Antonio Gutiérrez de Lara having returned from exile to lead Nuevo Santander's effort. Unable to establish authority, López could not collect taxes to fund civic projects and pay soldiers. Without soldiers, banditry abounded.⁴²³

Indian attacks also continued to be a problem. Soon after relieving Arredondo, Commandant General López attempted make peace with hostile tribes. Working through Francisco Ruíz—a revolutionary who had taken refuge with the Comanches after escaping from the Battle of Medina—López promised Apaches and Comanches annual tribute in exchange for cessation of hostilities. The Indians agreed to these terms and traveled to Mexico City in January 1823 to sign a formal peace treaty. Once there, a Lipan chief assured the gathered politicians that there was no longer any reason to fight, as the Apaches had been “enemies of

⁴²² Robertson, *Iturbide of Mexico*, 205, 211, 294-296; Timothy Henderson, *A Glorious Defeat: Mexico and Its War with the United States* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007), 25-26; Fowler, *Santa Anna*, 58-60, 65; Andrews, “The Rise and Fall of a Regional Strongman,” 36-38.

⁴²³ John Tutino, *From Insurrection to Revolution in Mexico: Social Bases of Agrarian Violence, 1750-1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 215-222; Benson, *Provincial Deputation*, 57; Andrews, “The Rise and Fall of a Regional Strongman,” 35. For more on the state of the Internal Provinces after independence, see Joel Roberts Poinsett, *Notes on Mexico*.

the Spanish because of the conduct of General Arredondo.” Officials in the eastern provinces soon discovered the conditional nature of this statement. Unable to collect taxes and with little assistance from Mexico City, regional leaders could not afford to pay Indians the promised tribute and within a year of signing the peace treaty, Comanches and Apaches recommenced raiding. The attacks grew bolder and more deadly with each passing year, and cash-strapped politicians could do nothing to stop them. Within years, nowhere in the eastern provinces was safe from Comanches and Apaches. Indians even raided large cities like Saltillo.⁴²⁴

Americans remained a problem for Mexican politicians, as well. After having fled from Spanish forces in 1819, James Long decided to invade Texas again in September 1821. This time, only fifty-two men joined him—Mexico’s independence seems to have tempered the enthusiasm of most adventurers in New Orleans. On September 19, 1821, Long and his men set sail for Texas, landed in Matagorda Bay shortly thereafter, and captured La Bahía with little resistance. Once again, however, Ignacio Pérez arrived to end Long’s dream of taking Texas. Arredondo’s former compatriot surrounded La Bahía, forced Long’s surrender, and sent the filibusterer to Mexico City in chains. Guards later shot and killed Long in what was reported to be an escape attempt.⁴²⁵

Most Americans arriving in Texas in 1821 did not have Long’s hostile intentions, but came instead hoping to be a part of Moses Austin’s colonization plans. Austin’s death in 1821

⁴²⁴ Berlandier, *Journey to Mexico*, Vol. I, 413; Smith, *The Caddo Indians*, 111-112; Felipe de la Garza Apology to Americans, November 17, 1821, in Wood, *The History of Mexico in the Laredo Archives*, 17. Alamán, *Historia de México*, Vol. V, 701 (quotation). For more on Indian attacks in northern Mexico following independence, see Brian Delay, *War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexico War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008). For an excellent fictional portrayal of northern Mexico at this time, see Cormac McCarthy, *Blood Meridian, or, The Evening Redness of the West* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992).

⁴²⁵ Martínez, *Letters of Antonio Martínez*, 181, 185-186, 220-226, 279-281 (quotation on page 181); Jiménez, “Loyalist Officer in New Spain,” 124-126; Velasco Ávila, “La amenaza comanche en la frontera mexicano,” 100; Warren, “Long Expedition.”

and Mexican independence did not deter them. Indeed, when Stephen F. Austin traveled to Texas to assume his father's colonization efforts, he found that many Americans had already settled in the province without Mexico's approval. Hoping to legalize this colonization, Austin traveled to Mexico City. Because his father's agreement with don Joaquín gave him precedence over other potential colonizers, in January 1823, the Mexican government approved Austin's plan to settle 300 families in Texas. Austin returned to Texas shortly thereafter, legalized the already-settled colonists, fulfilled his contract for the 300 promised families, and petitioned the Mexican government for permission to bring in more. This petition, as well as requests from other potential American colonizers, was approved, sending thousands of Americans into Texas. Although the new government also sought to colonize the region with Europeans, Indians from the United States, and people from within Mexico as Arredondo and the Spanish government had intended, these efforts garnered few settlers when compared to American colonization. Instead of don Joaquín's plan for a small population of Americans surrounded by Tejanos, Tlaxcalans, Caddos, and Swiss, people from the United States soon outnumbered all others in Texas.⁴²⁶

Changes in Mexico's government led to disagreements with these colonists. Following Iturbide's abdication, Mexican politicians drafted the Constitution of 1824, which reorganized Mexico into a federalist republic, removed political power from Mexico City, and placed it in the hands of regional authorities. Although the Constitution of 1824 made provinces into states, it maintained the Eastern Internal Provinces as a subordinate region under the national

⁴²⁶ Randolph Campbell, *Gone to Texas: A History of the Lone Star State* (New York: Oxford University Press, (2003), 104-107. For a detailed overview of Mexico's attempts to colonize its periphery, see Hernández, *Mexican American Colonization during the Nineteenth Century*, 25-65.

government. It changed the name of Nuevo Santander to Tamaulipas and joined the sparsely inhabited Texas to the more populous Coahuila, creating the ill-named Coahuila y Texas. The Constitution of 1824 said nothing about slavery, leaving state governments to rule on the matter.⁴²⁷

The joining of Texas to Coahuila and the slavery issue created tension with the ever-increasing American population of Texas. Although Stephen F. Austin and many of his colonists adhered to the rules set forth in the colonization contract with Mexico, others did not, including thousands of colonists who began entering Texas illegally in the 1820s. Many of these immigrants refused to adopt Catholicism, learn Spanish, or obey many of their new nation's laws. African slavery was an especially contentious issue. When Mexico outlawed the practice in 1829, colonists violated the law by bringing slaves into Texas under 99-year work contracts. Politicians in the state government of Coahuila y Texas—seeing Americans in Texas growing number, influence, and unruliness—passed the Law of April 6, 1830, which ended American immigration into Texas. Although Americans in Texas hoped to gain statehood, which would allow them to restore slavery and immigration, Arredondo's former cadet, Santa Anna, rendered statehood inconsequential in 1835 when he overthrew Mexico's federalist government, repealed the Constitution of 1824, and installed himself as president. Statehood would not matter if all decisions came from Mexico City⁴²⁸

Many in the eastern provinces disapproved of Santa Anna's actions, but American immigrants and Tejanos went so far as to declare themselves in rebellion against Santa Anna. In

⁴²⁷ Henderson, *The Mexican Wars for Independence*, 195, 203; Campbell, *Gone to Texas*, 110-113. For a comprehensive overview of the slavery debate in Texas, see Torget, "Cotton Empire."

⁴²⁸ Campbell, *Gone to Texas*, 110-112, 116-117; Fowler, *Santa Anna*, 142, 145, 154-155.

response, the Mexican president gathered a 6,000-man army in winter 1835 and marched on Texas. In February 1836, Santa Anna entered Texas, following the same path he had traveled with don Joaquín's army twenty-three years before. It seems that Arredondo's "conduct was taken as a model" by Santa Anna. When the Mexican army was in preparation to attack 200 rebels in a former mission known as the Alamo, and an officer asked Santa Anna what was to be done with prisoners following the battle, "the example of Arredondo was cited." True to don Joaquín's legacy, on March 6, 1836, Santa Anna's forces overwhelmed the Alamo, killed its defenders, and set out to clear East Texas as Arredondo's army had done twenty-three years before.⁴²⁹

Like Arredondo's retribution, the Alamo massacre sent would-be revolutionaries fleeing to the United States. Unlike the Battle of Medina's aftermath, however, some rebels remained in Texas, formed an army, and used the massacre of their compatriots as a rallying cry. Screaming "Remember the Alamo!," on April 21, these revolutionaries defeated Santa Anna in battle, captured the Mexican president, and forced him to sign the Treaty of Velasco, which granted Texas independence from Mexico and made the Rio Grande the border of the two nations. Because the southern border of Texas had previously been the Nueces River, the Treaty of Velasco meant northern Coahuila and Nuevo Santander—now Tamaulipas—were now part of the independent Republic of Texas.⁴³⁰

During the ensuing decade, from 1836 to 1846, a variety of nations and independence movements vied for control of the eastern provinces. Mexican officials refused to recognize the

⁴²⁹ Campbell, *Gone to Texas*, 127, 129-130, 146; José Enrique de la Peña, *With Santa Anna in Texas: A Personal Narrative of the Revolution* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1975), 83-84 (quotations on page 83).

⁴³⁰ Campbell, *Gone to Texas*, 150, 157-158, 160; Fowler, *Santa Anna*, 186, 194.

Republic of Texas and the Rio Grande border, but political instability and rebellions in other provinces prevented the nation from retaking the rebellious province. This did not mean that the Republic of Texas was without problems. It had trouble preventing its citizens from invading Mexico and the nation fell into heavy debt. Comanches and Lipans maintained control of the Southern Plains and raided into Texas on a regular basis. Unable to deal with its problems, Texas politicians appealed to the United States for annexation. When these efforts failed, Texas President Sam Houston considered an alliance with the British, who hoped the Republic of Texas could provide them with cotton and arrest United States expansion.⁴³¹

International intrigue and revolution plagued the lower three eastern provinces as well. Owing to encouragement from traders in Texas and with Mexican soldiers unable to launch punitive expeditions on to the Southern Plains, Indian attacks increased throughout northern Mexico. This alienated the region's population and sowed discontent with Mexico City. One governor even threatened to join his province with the United States or Russia should the central government do nothing to stop Indian raids. Other nations also vied for control of the eastern provinces. In 1829, 3,500 Spanish troops landed in Tamaulipas hoping to return Mexico to the royalist fold. Although Santa Anna and the Mexican military defeated the invaders and Spain recognized Mexican independence in 1836, the Spanish continued plotting a takeover of Mexico throughout the 1830s and 1840s. During the 1838-1839 Pastry War between France and Mexico, some in France considered taking land in northern Mexico as compensation for unpaid debts, but the nation settled for blockading ports in Tamaulipas.⁴³²

⁴³¹ Campbell, *Gone to Texas*, 160-163.

⁴³² For more on the 1829 Spanish invasion of Mexico, see Catherine Andrews, "Spanish Plans for the Reconquest of Mexico and the Invasion of Tampico (1829)," *Espacios, Poblamiento Y Conflicto En El Noreste*

The struggle for the eastern provinces continued in the 1840s. With many in the Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas wary of the centralist government, in 1840, federalists under José María Carbajal—who had almost starved as a child when Arredondo’s troops locked his mother in La Quinta—declared these states independent of Mexico and created the Republic of the Rio Grande. The following year, Mexico sent an army to the eastern provinces to end both Carbajal’s rebellion and the rebellion in Texas. Although Mexican forces defeated Carbajal and returned the lower eastern provinces to Mexico’s control, their subsequent invasions of Texas failed. They would prove to be Mexico’s last realistic chances to retake the rebellious province, as the United States officially annexed Texas in 1845. Refusing to accept the loss of Texas, especially with its southern border at the Rio Grande, politicians in Mexico City called for war against their powerful northern neighbor. Many in the United States also wanted war, hoping it would provide a means to take more territory from Mexico. These war hawks got their wish when Mexican and American forces clashed north of the Rio Grande in April 1846. The next month, on May 13, 1846, the United States and Mexico went to war.⁴³³

The first battles of the U.S.-Mexico War occurred in the eastern provinces. In the conflict’s opening months, Americans faced little resistance in their march from Texas into Nuevo León. Many citizens of the eastern provinces had little interest in defending a country that provided little financial and military support. Some even assisted the invaders. Things

Mexicano Y Texas =: People, Places, and Conflicts in Northeastern Mexico and Texas, ed. Ruth E. Arboleyda Castro, John B. Hawthorne, Gerardo Lara Cisneros, Gustavo A. Ramírez Castilla, et. al. (Brownsville, Tex: University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College, 2009): 469-484.

⁴³³ Chance, *José María de Jesus Carvajal*, 3-7, 16; David M. Vigness, “Republic of the Rio Grande,” <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ngr01> (accessed July 17, 2012); Campbell, *Gone to Texas*, 184-186; Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 738-739, 742-743. For a social and cultural history of the region that made up the Republic of the Rio Grande, see Beatriz de la Garza, *From the Republic of the Rio Grande: A Personal History of the Place and the People* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013). For more on the lead up to the U.S.-Mexico War, see Henderson, *A Glorious Defeat*.

changed on September 21, 1846, when the American army attacked Monterrey and faced heavy resistance from a numerically inferior Mexican force. Possibly owing to don Joaquín's defensive modifications to the Obispado, 300 Mexican soldiers in the fortification fought off 500 Americans on September 22. The defenders abandoned their post only after believing the Americans had retreated. When the United States army entered Monterrey's center on September 23, Arredondo's former home became the scene of some gruesome fighting. Soldiers, on one side or the other, peppered the residence with musket shot and cannonballs, sliced walls and ceilings with bayonets, and used elaborate wooden doors for cover and firewood. On September 25, 1846, with bodies filling Monterrey's streets, Mexican forces surrendered. Thirty-three years after Arredondo's victory in the Battle of Medina, Americans finally conquered the eastern provinces.⁴³⁴

American victory in the Battle of Monterrey did not end conflict in the eastern provinces, nor did the fall of Mexico City to United States forces in 1847. In 1848, the United States and Mexico signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the U.S.-Mexico War, gave California and New Mexico to the United States, and forced Mexico to recognize the southern border of Texas as the Rio Grande. The United States retained nominal control over Texas until 1861, when residents once again rebelled against their home country and joined the Confederate States of America. In the ensuing Civil War, the lower eastern provinces profited from cotton trade with Texas and served as an invasion point for Union forces. Indeed, the last battle of the American Civil War was fought in the former eastern provinces. Although the United States once again gained control of Texas in 1865, it still faced many of the problems

⁴³⁴ Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 748-749; Christopher D. Dishman, *A Perfect Gibraltar: The Battle for Monterrey Mexico, 1946* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010), 91, 157-160, 196-198.

that Arredondo had dealt with fifty years before. Comanches and Apaches continued raiding until the United States invaded the Southern Plains in the 1870s and used overwhelming numbers and automatic weapons to force the Indians on to reservations. Contraband trading—now from Mexico—remained a problem. Although American leaders would not have to deal with a large-scale insurgency following the Civil War, dissatisfied Mexicans frequently raided across the international border to redress grievances and obtain American goods.⁴³⁵

Nuevo León, Coahuila, and Tamaulipas also remained a contested land after the U.S.-Mexico War. As in the United States, Apaches, Comanches, and other hostile Indians continued to attack Mexican citizens until the latter half of the nineteenth century. French forces took parts of the former eastern provinces in the 1860s. Bandits remained in the countryside even longer. Minor rebellions against the central government periodically occurred. During the Mexican Revolution from 1910-1920, revolutionary Francisco “Pancho” Villa controlled areas in Coahuila and insurgents fought the national government in other regions of northeastern Mexico. After the revolution, Mexico City consolidated power over most of its northern territories, but even into the twenty-first century, independent groups such as drug cartels control swaths of the former eastern provinces.⁴³⁶

Arredondo was not alive to see his former capital fall to American forces in 1846. He had departed Mexico for Cuba on December 28, 1821, on board the schooner *Rosita*. There are no records of the events of the voyage, but the normally calm two-week passage must have been hellacious, as it seems that the former commandant general had contracted a tropical disease

⁴³⁵ Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 779-783, 789, 805, 809-810; Campbell, *Gone to Texas*, 257-259.

⁴³⁶ For more on the contested lower eastern provinces, see Beatriz de la Garza, *From the Republic of the Rio Grande*.

during his last days in Tampico. If Arredondo were well enough to be on deck when the boat made its final approach to Havana harbor, the old Spaniard would have seen a city of 85,000 people surrounded by tropical environs that possessed “all the soft and smiling beauties of nature.” The fertile hills and jungle-filled valleys enveloping the city must have overwhelmed don Joaquín, the former commandant general having spent the past eleven years in the small, dusty frontier towns of the eastern provinces. The *Rosita* docked in Havana on January 11, 1822.⁴³⁷

Arredondo’s arrival was unpleasant. Stepping off the docks, bureaucrats thronged him and asked questions about the nature of his departure from Mexico. It seems that when don Joaquín informed officials that he was a brigadier general, junior officers refused to recognize his rank and treated him as they would any other officer. After this humiliating process, Arredondo made his way from the city’s bustling port to a central square, where he found boarding. From his demeanor, it appears that don Joaquín was unhappy with his accommodations and the situation in general. He immediately petitioned the captain general of Cuba for 6,000 pesos in unpaid wages and 1,000 pesos as compensation for expenses incurred traveling from Monterrey to Cuba. He also complained about his health and the poor treatment he had received when arriving in Cuba.⁴³⁸

Arredondo also sent a letter to King Ferdinand explaining why he had abandoned the eastern provinces. In an apologetic tone, Arredondo begged his patriarch for forgiveness. He explained that he had declared for independence only after all of his soldiers and officers had

⁴³⁷ Gaspar López to Viceroy, January 24, 1822, Legajo XI/111/3-103, SDN; Poinsett, *Notes on Mexico*, 210, 215 (quotation on page 210). Poinsett gives the population of Havana in 1817 as 83,598.

⁴³⁸ Garza, “Joaquín de Arredondo,” in *Diccionario Biográfico de Nuevo Leon*, Tomo I; Poinsett, *Notes on Mexico*, 210-211 (quotation).

gone over to the enemy's side. The humbled don Joaquín then claimed he had almost lost his life four times escaping to Cuba. Although he made it to the island safely, the journey had cost him his health and he had lost many of his personal possessions. More importantly, he felt that he had lost his honor. He claimed to be the "most prompt defender of the rights of my King and to the great nation to which he belonged" and that he was willing to fight for the king until "his last drop of blood." Arredondo then asked for forgiveness and permission to retire. He had given Spain thirty-five years of his life, during which time he had lost his health and most of his family. He informed his king that he would await any orders that he may have. Ferdinand accepted don Joaquín explanation and gave the old soldier permission to retire.⁴³⁹

Although suffering from the effects of some tropical disease, don Joaquín sought passage to Spain. Unfortunately for Arredondo, finding a ship leaving Cuba was difficult. Because pirates, privateers, and unfriendly European navies saw a single Spanish ship as easy prey, most merchants traveled in convoys protected by armed frigates. Because finding protection and enough ships for a convoy was time consuming, it could sometimes take months for a convoy to come together. Fortunately for Arredondo, it seems that one such convoy was leaving for Spain just a month after his arrival. To prevent disease from spreading to the mother country, Cuban officials denied Arredondo permission to leave until a doctor could verify that he was healthy. Because Arredondo was infected with malaria, yellow fever, or a combination of the diseases, he was not allowed to join the Iberian-bound convoy.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁹ Arredondo to King, April 11, 1822, Signatura Cuba 1642, Titulo Correspondencia de Jefes y Oficiales, AGI.

⁴⁴⁰ Arredondo to Captain General of Cuba, February, 20, 1822, Signatura Cuba 1981, Titulo Correspondencia de Jefes y Oficiales Archivo de Indias, AGI. The legajo contains multiple letters outlying Arredondo's efforts to obtain passage to Spain. For a brief overview quarantine measures, see Knaut, "Yellow Fever and the Late Colonial Public Health Response in the Port of Veracruz," 641.

Having missed the convoy, Arredondo attempted to regain his health in order to pass a doctor's inspection and return to Spain. This likely involved sitting for long hours in the Havana sun, as medical officials of the time believed that good air could cure disease. If Arredondo followed this regimen, it was ineffective because on June 4, 1822, he complained that he could not return to Iberia because he had relapsed into illness. He had difficulty breathing and frequently vomited blood. Although a relapse of malaria may be responsible for these symptoms, it is very possible that Arredondo contracted yellow fever. Cuba was notoriously insalubrious and there was a yellow fever outbreak in Havana in the summer of 1822. Although Arredondo held out hope that he could return to Spain, he continued to suffer from poor health over the next year. Still sick in 1823, he resigned himself to remaining in Cuba.⁴⁴¹

With no more wars to fight, Arredondo petitioned the Cuban government for a pension for his years of service. Overburdened by other expenses, the captain general of Cuba was unable to meet Arredondo's requests immediately. Don Joaquín responded by sending letter after letter until the Cuban government finally conceded and issued Arredondo a monthly stipend of 200 pesos. Because this was half what retired brigadier generals were supposed to receive, don Joaquín sent more letters of complaint demanding 400 pesos. It is unclear if the Cuban government finally acceded to Arredondo's appeal.⁴⁴²

There is little information concerning Arredondo in his final years. Judging by an improvement in his handwriting, he eventually recovered from the illnesses that had plagued him since leaving New Spain. One source indicates that he served as an advisor to Captain

⁴⁴¹ Arredondo to Captain General of Cuba, June 4, 1822, Signatura Cuba 1981A, AGI; Knaut, "Yellow Fever and the Late Colonial Public Health Response in the Port of Veracruz," 641-642. There are a number of letters in Signatura Cuba 1981A referring to a yellow fever outbreak in Havana at the time.

⁴⁴² Arredondo to Captain General of Cuba, February 16, 1822, Signatura Cuba 1981, AGI.

General Nicolás Mahy of Cuba. If true, it was probably in an unofficial capacity, as no letters discussing policy between don Joaquín and Mahy survive. Arredondo did perform some official duties, however. In 1826, he served as a juror in a trial for Brigadier General Gabriel de Torres y Velasco. Torres had voluntarily submitted to a trial by his peers to clear his name for having surrendered Cartagena, Colombia, to insurgents in 1821. In a narrative that must have been familiar to don Joaquín, Torres argued that he had had inadequate finances and manpower to defend Cartagena. He had surrendered only when he had no other option. Arredondo, likely considering his own situation in Monterrey in 1821, sided with Torres and said that the government paper should carry a declaration of Torres's innocence. The rest of the jury agreed and found that Torres was not at fault for the loss of Cartagena.⁴⁴³

Arredondo was also part of a Spanish plot to retake Mexico in 1829. It is unclear with present evidence the exact role he played in the scheme. Newspapers claim that don Joaquín returned to the service of the crown, and was put in command of nineteen vessels for a planned invasion at Soto la Marina, which would coincide with an invasion at another location. A second version of events has King Ferdinand personally placing Arredondo in charge of all Spanish forces sent to retake Mexico. Unfortunately for the narrative of his life, there is no evidence that Arredondo was among the 3,500 men that invaded Mexico in 1829. The extent of don Joaquín's involvement was likely providing Spanish forces with tactical information. Had

⁴⁴³ Garza, "Joaquín de Arredondo," in *Diccionario Biográfico de Nuevo Leon*, Tomo I; Justo Cuño Bonito, "Crimen y Perdón. El juicio en La Habana al gobernador Gabriel de Torres y Velasco por la entrega de la Plaza de Cartagena (1824-1827)," *Estudios Ibero-Americanos* 6 (Julio-Diciembre 2010): 304-305. I searched Mahy's official correspondence during 1822 in the AGI for any reference to Arredondo as an advisor, but located nothing.

don Joaquín been in charge of the invasion, it would have made for interesting theater, as Santa Anna was the officer tasked with expelling the Spanish.⁴⁴⁴

Arredondo did not spend the last years of his life alone. He still had servants, and it appears that his daughter and her husband remained with the former commandant general in Cuba. The island was also home to thousands of fellow Spanish officers who had fled the colonies, as well as a number of immigrants from his former Barcelona home. Arredondo also appears to have remarried, or at least cohabitated, with a woman named doña Luísa Gómez. She remained with Arredondo until his death in 1837.⁴⁴⁵

Arredondo's daughter and stepson survived him, as did his illegitimate daughter, Carmen Arredondo, who remained in Monterrey for the rest of her life. In 1836, Carmen married José Eleuterio González, a medical doctor who would go on to write extensively about don Joaquín. Carmen and José's marriage lasted only six years.⁴⁴⁶

⁴⁴⁴ "City of Mexico," September 19, 1829, *New York Mercantile*; Fowler, *Santa Anna*, 120-123.

⁴⁴⁵ Garza, "Joaquín de Arredondo," in *Diccionario Biografico de Nuevo Leon*, Tomo I.

⁴⁴⁶ Guadalupe del Moral Petition, February 8, 1822, Exp. XI/111/3-13, AHDN. For more on González, see González, *Colección de noticias*.

CHAPTER 13: CONCLUSION

In that sleep and in sleeps to follow the judge did visit. Who would come other? A great shambling mutant, silent and serene. Whatever his antecedents, he was wholly other than their sum, nor was there system by which to divide him back into his origins for he would not go. Whoever would seek out his history through what unraveling of loins and ledger books must stand at last darkened and dumb at the shore of a void without terminus or origin and whatever science he might bring to bear upon the dusty primal matter blowing down out of the millennia will discover no trace of ultimate atavistic egg by which to reckon his commencing.

Cormac McCarthy on the difficulty in writing biography.

Today, many in Texas and northeastern Mexico know the names Stephen F. Austin, Antonio López de Santa Anna, and Fray Servando Mier, but few are familiar with Joaquín de Arredondo. This was not always the case. For many years after don Joaquín's departure for Cuba, the people of northeastern Mexico spoke Arredondo's name with disgust and fear. Whenever an ill befell the eastern provinces, don Joaquín was to blame. Arredondo served as a villain, an archetype of the cruel, oppressive Spaniards who had ruled Mexico for 300 years. Any positives from Arredondo's time in northeastern New Spain were forgotten. Any negatives committed by insurgents placed at don Joaquín's feet.⁴⁴⁷

An 1867 poem encapsulates this attitude. Entitled "Romance de Arredondo," the poem describes Arredondo leading an army into a remote village. As he does so, the poem's author implores the people of the village to run into the countryside to escape this "frontier of terror." The author goes on to pity the people of the eastern provinces because they had to live under the reign of don Joaquín, whom the poem describes as an "abortion." According to the poem,

⁴⁴⁷ For examples of the people of Mexico's disdain for Arredondo, see Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución*.

Arredondo was a cruel, demonic man who committed murder, raped, and took advantage of others for personal amusement. He was a terror on the battlefield, and his actions brought the eastern provinces to ruin.⁴⁴⁸

Does this poem provide an accurate portrayal of don Joaquín? Was he a sociopathic despot who committed horrendous atrocities and allowed his soldiers to torment the people of the eastern provinces without punishment? Did his actions bring devastation to the eastern provinces? Was, he, as the poem describes, a powerful battlefield commander who sent fear in his opponents? The answers to these questions are not as simple as the poem or previous historians have portrayed them to be.⁴⁴⁹

Was don Joaquín the brutal monster of the poem, or was he, as his first biographer Judith Jiménez explained, “no more cruel or bloody than the majority of the military men of his age”? A brief look at don Joaquín’s past would seem to indicate the former, as there is no doubt that Arredondo violated a number of socially accepted principles. He was a womanizer, he played pranks, he bullied. Of particular abhorrence, he authorized the execution of surrendering enemies and unarmed prisoners of war. Evidence also suggests that he did nothing while his men raped and robbed civilians. Although Jiménez argued that many of these criticisms were nothing more than rhetoric of anti-Spanish, liberal historians and don Joaquín’s enemies, some of Arredondo’s own men objected to his brutality. The man who killed Elizondo, for example, did so because Arredondo and the conduct of his fellow soldiers disgusted him. Just as they would be today, don Joaquín’s actions were seen as atrocities at the time he

⁴⁴⁸ Guillermo Prieto, “Romance de Arredondo” in Guillermo Prieto, *El Romancero Nacional* (Mexico D.F.: Oficina de la Secretaría de Fomento, 1885), 313-315. A complete version of the poem can be found in the appendix.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

committed them. Indeed, most high-ranking officers from Europe looked down on executing prisoners during the time of the Napoleonic Wars. As such, Arredondo it seems that deserves his reputation as a cruel, cold-hearted individual during times of war.⁴⁵⁰

Although Jiménez's depiction of Arredondo as a benign warrior is incorrect, her assertion that the commandant general was no more cruel than his contemporaries cannot be dismissed entirely. Indeed, the conditions of the eastern provinces likely dictated don Joaquín's actions, and other military officers may have reacted in a like manner when placed in a similar situation. Arredondo was most brutal as a response to revolutionary violence and when logistics required extreme measures. He executed rebels at Tula only after finding bodies of his soldiers hanging from trees and discovering that Indians had cooked and eaten a Spanish prisoner. Just before arriving in Texas, the site of don Joaquín at his most violent, Arredondo learned that insurgents had executed unarmed high-ranking Spanish officials. In this instance, the revolutionaries changed the rules of war. When the commandant general then told his men to offer no quarter to surrendering revolutionaries, he was playing by the rules established by the insurgents.

Strategy also played a role in Arredondo's cruelty, as the logistical situation of the eastern provinces required extreme measures. Lacking soldiers to police northeastern New Spain or resources to keep his citizens happy, don Joaquín found that execution could instill fear and prevent revolution. Executions also meant fewer food consumers. Indeed, Arredondo's decision to execute prisoners following his victory at Fort Soto la Marina may have been more

⁴⁵⁰ Prieto, *El romancero nacional*, 313-315; Jiménez, "Loyalist Officer in New Spain," XIII, 139. For an example of Arredondo's harsh words and braggadocio, see Proclamation of Joaquín de Arredondo, June 9, 1814, BA, R54, F572-576.

about conserving food than anything else. Lack of resources may also have been the reason that Arredondo ignored his soldiers' indiscretions. With his men starving and going months without receiving pay, don Joaquín maintained loyalty by turning the other way when his soldiers preyed on the civilians of the Eastern Internal Provinces. Allowing his men to steal food and goods was, in effect, a means of paying and feeding them.⁴⁵¹

It is impossible to say how others would have reacted in Arredondo's situation, but in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, officers fighting in similar circumstances reacted much like don Joaquín. Generals in revolutions tended to be crueler than those fighting wars between nations. Differences in race and religion increased violence. Perhaps any European general used to fighting other nations would have reacted in the same manner as don Joaquín if dropped in the middle of New Spain's insurgency. Napoleon Bonaparte's actions in the 1799 Siege of Jaffa speak to this point. At the start of this conflict, Napoleon promised to spare the lives of the Muslim Turkish defenders of Jaffa should they surrender peacefully. Although Napoleon had earned a reputation for honoring his word concerning prisoners in the past, he broke his promise when the Turks in Jaffa surrendered. Because the defenders had previously beheaded some of his messengers, were seen as in rebellion against France, and his soldiers were starving, Napoleon executed the prisoners of Jaffa and allowed his men to rape and pillage the city's populace. In taking this approach, Napoleon conserved food, maintained his soldiers' loyalty, and sent a message to nearby cities. The circumstances of Jaffa changed

⁴⁵¹ Concerning the executions following the Siege of Soto la Marina, sources disagree so much on numbers, dates, and the circumstances under which the executions took place, that it is unclear whether or not Arredondo intentionally violated his promise to spare prisoners.

Napoleon's tactics. Accordingly, the situation in the eastern provinces may have brought out cruelty in other generals just as it did in don Joaquín.⁴⁵²

To the author of "Romance de Arredondo," it was not the eastern provinces that brought out the worst in Spanish soldiers, but Arredondo's leadership. Although the poem does not mention Antonio López de Santa Anna specifically, many historians believe that Arredondo taught the future president of Mexico to be cruel. Indeed, Oscar Callcott's *Santa Anna* promoted the idea that Arredondo was Santa Anna's "mentor." Subsequent historians have understood this to mean that the two men shared a deep, personal relationship. They should not. Arredondo only references Santa Anna in a few documents outside of muster rolls. Although he lavishes praise on the young soldier for his courage on the battlefield, he does so for many other officers as well. For his part, Santa Anna only mentioned Arredondo once in his memoirs, noting simply, "Under the orders of Colonel Joaquín Arredondo, the first battalion of my regiment was sent to pacify the eastern internal provinces of Mexico." On the other hand, Santa Anna described Spanish Field Marshal José Davila by saying, "The old general truly loved me as a son, and such kindness touched the strings of my heart!" If one were to believe Santa Anna, Davila was his mentor, not Arredondo.⁴⁵³

Although the term "mentor" does not apply to Arredondo and Santa Anna's relationship, service in the commandant general's army certainly influenced the young officer later in life. Santa Anna's military prowess, ability to maintain loyalty among his soldiers, and political strong-arming likely owed much to observing Arredondo. Unfortunately for posterity's

⁴⁵² Walter Scott, *The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte: Emperor of the French* (Paris: A. and W. Galignani, 1828), 257-258.

⁴⁵³ Antonio López de Santa Anna, *The Eagle; the Autobiography of Santa Anna* (Austin: Pemberton Press, 1967), 7, 9.

sake, because Santa Anna spoke little on don Joaquín, just how much the elder officer influenced the cadet is unclear. What is known is that Santa Anna cited Arredondo's harsh reprisals in Texas in his decision to kill the prisoners of the Alamo, and it seems that the events of 1813 taught Santa Anna how to deal with Americans.

Arredondo influenced the Texas Revolution and the future of the eastern provinces in other ways. If one were to believe the 1867 poem, don Joaquín brought lasting ruin to the Eastern Internal Provinces. It is true that the eastern provinces were worse off in 1821 than they had been in 1811, and the royalists were responsible for much of the destruction. For example, Arredondo's actions in the wake of the Battle of Medina crippled Texas to a degree that required drastic measures to recover, and his soldiers stole and destroyed property throughout the eastern provinces. There is no question that the commandant general employed extreme measures. Arredondo, however, would argue that his actions were necessary to end revolutionary violence, and that his men acted in the manner that they did because citizens did not provide for them. Royalists would also point to the destruction committed by Huacal in Nuevo Santander as an example of what revolutionaries would do if they have been victorious. By stopping the insurgents using harsh measures, Arredondo was, in effect, prevent future destruction of the eastern provinces. It is unclear which side of the argument is correct, as historian David Weber noted, "by 1821 it must have been difficult to tell whether royalists or rebels had done the most harm."⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵⁴ Chipman and Joseph, *Spanish Texas*, 255; David J. Weber, *The Mexican Frontier: The American Southwest under Mexico*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982), 4 (quotation); Smith, *From Dominance to Disappearance*, 96-97; Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*, 187; Alamán, *Historia de México*, Vol. V, 701; Berlandier, *Journey to Mexico*, Vol. I, 413, 445; For a discussion of Arredondo's influence on the increase in Indian raids, see Velasco Ávila, "La amenaza comanche en la frontera mexicana, 1800-1841," 90-94.

Many historians consider Arredondo's approval of Moses Austin's petition a desperate measure meant to rectify his mistakes in Texas. In this interpretation, don Joaquín turned to his American enemies for salvation. They could do what Arredondo could not: create a peaceful and economically viable Texas. This oversimplification ignores Austin's former Spanish citizenship and many other considerations. Austin knew Spanish laws and customs, and his petition had precedent, as Spain had allowed former citizens from the Louisiana Territory to colonize Texas in the past. Additionally, the provincial deputation approved of Austin's petition, so it was not as if Arredondo was taking a radical approach alone. In addition, Spain and Arredondo were implementing multiple plans to colonize Texas, they just had not been carried through by the time of independence.⁴⁵⁵

Was don Joaquín a military mastermind as the poem suggests? A cursory glance at his battlefield accomplishments suggests yes. He and his men rarely lost a battle or skirmish, and the commandant general used the few resources at his command to great effect. His successes in Nuevo Santander and his victory in the Battle of Medina, for example, were lopsided affairs that subdued revolution with little cost to Spain. This would seem to indicate that Arredondo was an excellent military leader, but his record was not spotless. Although victorious in the Siege of Soto la Marina, his decision to charge the fort was foolhardy and cost the Spanish lives. Additionally, he never formulated an effective plan to defeat the Indians of the Southern Plains and was unable to prevent revolution in the eastern provinces in 1821.

⁴⁵⁵ Weber, *The Mexican Frontier*, 4, 160-161; Smith, *The Caddo Indians*, 111; Hatcher, *The Opening of Texas*, 271-274. For more on Arredondo's plans to colonize Texas, see chapter X of Martínez, *Letters of Antonio Martínez*.

Arredondo was probably not a tactical or strategic genius, but was, nevertheless a pragmatic and efficient military leader. Unlike men like Napoleon and Frederick the Great, he did not possess “coup d’oeil,” or an innate ability to analyze battlefield situations and recognize the best way to attack the enemy. Many of don Joaquín’s battle plans were simplistic and, as evidenced by the siege of Soto la Marina, Arredondo did not always enter combat with the best strategy. In spite of these deficiencies, the commandant general was, nevertheless, an excellent military leader. His success came from preparation and an ability to do the best with what he had. He trained well for combat, he used available resources efficiently, he avoided situations where there was a possibility of defeat, and he delegated authority effectively.

What all of this means is that Arredondo was not the poem’s monster, nor was he Judith Jiménez’s romantic loyalist fighting for a time long gone. He was a man who could be cruel, but outside forces often brought this out in him. Whereas better men may have risen above such pettiness, Arredondo did not. He sometimes ignored the rules of battle and often used violence when he thought it was the most effective means to an end. When given the difficult job of ruling the eastern provinces, he performed the job in the best way that available resources and an aristocratic upbringing would allow. Much like the nation to which he declared his allegiance, Arredondo was a pragmatist who changed his leadership style as the situation dictated it. By understanding this, it is easy to understand the eastern provinces during one of the most tumultuous times in North American history.

APPENDIX

ROMANCE DE ARREDONDO

¡Hola! ¡hola! á las mujeres, ¡Hola! ¡hola! á los ancianos, Corran niños y labriegos Hasta perderse en los campos. Allá entre nubes de polvo Se está viendo á los soldados De don Joaquín de Arredondo, Que es de la Frontera espanto. Cuando pasan sus legiones La tierra queda temblando, La gente de los cuarteles Dice que es asombro y pasmo, T en la capital sus hechos Se creen por arte de encanto. Airados los insurgentes Le ven como al mismo diablo; Con verter sangre delira Despierto como soñando. Y el General Arredondo Es, á la verdad hablando, Un aborto, un mal engendro Del calavera soldado, Desprecio de los valientes Y de los necios encanto. Vino, fandangos, mujeres, Ocupaban su descanso, Y luego frivolo y rudo, Prostituyendo su mando, Tocaba el clarín alarma, Se figuraba un asalto, Y al frente de sus secuaces, Y con la espada en la mano, Arremetía en las sombras Con entes imaginarios, Y los honores del triunfo Reclamaba entusiasmado. ¡Guay las provincias internas! ¡Ay de los pueblos lejanos En que aquel mico, en pantera Se trasformaba tirano! Entonces era el degüello Y los pueblos incendiados; Entonces á las familias Eran terribles asaltos,

Para tornar á las bellas,
Y á la embriaguez y al fandango.
Así cual nube cargada
De tempestad y de rayos,
Por huracanes furiosos
Terror y muerte arrastrando,
Retronaba en los desiertos
Y en los pueblos era estrago;
Así llamaba victorias

Sus crueles asesinatos.
¡Pobres provincias internas!
¡Ay de sus hermosos llanos!
¡Ay de los pueblos inermes
Con semejantes soldados!

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